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THE

ROMANY RYE;

A SEQUEL TO "LAVENGRO."

BY GEORGE BORROW,

AUTHOR OF
"THE BIBLE IN SPAIN," "THE GYPSIES OF SPAIN," ETC.

"Fear God, and take your own part."

IN TWO VOLUMES.—VOL. I.

LONDON:
JOHN MURRAY, ALBEMARLE STREET.
1857.

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ADVERTISEMENT.

It having been frequently stated in print that the book called "Lavengro" was got up expressly against the popish agitation, in the years 1850-51, the author takes this opportunity of saying that the principal part of that book was written in the year '43, that the whole of it was completed before the termination of the year '46, and that it was in the hands of the publisher in the year '48. And here he cannot forbear observing, that it was the duty of that publisher to have rebutted a statement which he knew to be a calumny; and also to have set the public right on another point dealt with in the Appendix to the present work, more especially as he was the proprietor of a review enjoying, however undeservedly, a certain sale and reputation.

"But take your own part, boy!
For if you don't, no one will take it for you."

With respect to "Lavengro," the author feels

that he has no reason to be ashamed of it. In writing that book he did his duty, by pointing out to his country people the nonsense which, to the greater part of them, is as the breath of their nostrils, and which, if indulged in, as it probably will be, to the same extent as hitherto, will, within a very few years, bring the land which he most loves beneath a foreign yoke: he does not here allude to the yoke of Rome.

Instead of being ashamed, has he not rather cause to be proud of a book which has had the honour of being rancorously abused and execrated by the very people of whom the country has least reason to be proud?

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CHAPTER XXXI.

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One day Cogia Efendy went to a bridal festival. The masters of the feast, observing his old and coarse apparel, paid him no consideration whatever. The Cogia saw that he had no chance of notice; so going out, he hurried to his house, and, putting on a splendid pelisse, returned to the place of festival. No sooner did he enter the door than the masters advanced to meet him, and saying, "Welcome, Cogia Efendy," with all imaginable honour and reverence, placed him at the head of the table, and said, "Please to eat, Lord Cogia." Forthwith the Cogia, taking hold of one of the furs of his pelisse, said, "Welcome, my pelisse; please to eat, my lord." The masters looking at the Cogia with great surprise, said, "What are you about?" Whereupon the Cogia replied, "As it is quite evident that all the honour paid, is paid to my pelisse. I think it ought to have some food too."—Pleasantries of the Cogia Nasr Eddin Efendi.

THE ROMANY RYE.

CHAPTER I.

THE MAKING OF THE LINCH-PIN.—THE SOUND SLEEPER.—BREAKFAST.—THE POSTILLION'S DEPARTURE.

I AWOKE at the first break of day, and, leaving the postillion fast asleep, stepped out of the tent. The dingle was dank and dripping. I lighted a fire of coals, and got my forge in readiness. I then ascended to the field, where the chaise was standing as we had left it on the previous evening. After looking at the cloud-stone near it, now cold, and split into three pieces, I set about prying narrowly into the condition of the wheel and axletree—the latter had sustained no damage of any consequence, and the wheel, as far as I was able to judge, was sound, being only slightly injured in the box. The only thing requisite to set the chaise in a travelling condition appeared to be a linch-pin, which I determined to make. Going

to the companion wheel, I took out the linch-pin, which I carried down with me to the dingle, to serve me as a model.

I found Belle by this time dressed, and seated near the forge: with a slight nod to her like that which a person gives who happens to see an acquaintance when his mind is occupied with important business, I forthwith set about my work. Selecting a piece of iron which I thought would serve my purpose, I placed it in the fire, and plying the bellows in a furious manner, soon made it hot; then seizing it with the tongs, I laid it on my anvil, and began to beat it with my hammer, according to the rules of my art. The dingle resounded with my strokes. Belle sat still, and occasionally smiled, but suddenly started up, and retreated towards her encampment, on a spark which I purposely sent in her direction alighting on her knee. I found the making of a linch-pin no easy matter; it was, however, less difficult than the fabrication of a pony-shoe; my work, indeed, was much facilitated by my having another pin to look at. In about three-quarters of an hour I had succeeded tolerably well, and had produced a linch-pin which I thought would serve. During all this time, notwithstanding the noise which

I was making, the postillion never showed his face. His non-appearance at first alarmed me: I was afraid he might be dead, but, on looking into the tent, I found him still buried in the soundest sleep. "He must surely be descended from one of the seven sleepers," said I, as I turned away, and resumed my work. My work finished, I took a little oil, leather, and sand, and polished the pin as well as I could; then, summoning Belle, we both went to the chaise, where, with her assistance, I put on the wheel. The linch-pin which I had made fitted its place very well, and having replaced the other, I gazed at the chaise for some time with my heart full of that satisfaction which results from the consciousness of having achieved a great action; then, after looking at Belle in the hope of obtaining a compliment from her lips, which did not come, I returned to the dingle, without saying a word, followed by her. Belle set about making preparations for breakfast; and I, taking the kettle, went and filled it at the spring. Having hung it over the fire, I went to the tent in which the postillion was still sleeping, and called upon him to arise. He awoke with a start, and stared around him at first with the utmost surprise, not unmixed, I could observe, with a certain degree of

fear. At last, looking in my face, he appeared to recollect himself. "I had quite forgot," said he, as he got up, "where I was, and all that happened yesterday. However, I remember now the whole affair, thunder-storm, thunder-bolt, frightened horses, and all your kindness. Come, I must see after my coach and horses; I hope we shall be able to repair the damage." "The damage is already quite repaired," said I, "as you will see, if you come to the field above." "You don't say so," said the postillion, coming out of the tent; "well, I am mightily beholden to you. Good morning, young gentlewoman," said he, addressing Belle, who, having finished her preparations, was seated near the fire. "Good morning, young man," said Belle, "I suppose you would be glad of some breakfast; however, you must wait a little, the kettle does not boil." "Come and look at your chaise," said I; "but tell me how it happened that the noise which I have been making did not awake you; for three-quarters of an hour at least I was hammering close at your ear." "I heard you all the time," said the postillion, "but your hammering made me sleep all the sounder; I am used to hear hammering in my morning sleep. There 's a forge close by the room where I sleep when

I 'm at home, at my inn; for we have all kinds of conveniences at my inn—forge, carpenter's shop, and wheelwright's,—so that when I heard you hammering, I thought, no doubt, that it was the old noise, and that I was comfortable in my bed at my own inn." We now ascended to the field, where I showed the postillion his chaise. He looked at the pin attentively, rubbed his hands, and gave a loud laugh. "Is it not well done?" said I. "It will do till I get home," he replied. "And that is all you have to say?" I demanded. "And that 's a good deal," said he, "considering who made it." "But don't be offended," he added, "I shall prize it all the more for its being made by a gentleman, and no blacksmith; and so will my governor, when I show it to him. I shan't let it remain where it is, but will keep it, as a remembrance of you, as long as I live." He then again rubbed his hands with great glee, and said, "I will now go and see after my horses, and then to breakfast, partner, if you please." Suddenly, however, looking at his hands, he said, "Before sitting down to breakfast, I am in the habit of washing my hands and face: I suppose you could not furnish me with a little soap and water." "As much water as you please," said I, "but if you want soap, I must go and

trouble the young gentlewoman for some." "By no means," said the postillion, "water will do at a pinch." "Follow me," said I, and leading him to the pond of the frogs and newts, I said, "this is my ewer; you are welcome to part of it—the water is so soft that it is scarcely necessary to add soap to it;" then lying down on the bank, I plunged my head into the water, then scrubbed my hands and face, and afterwards wiped them with some long grass which grew on the margin of the pond. "Bravo," said the postillion, "I see you know how to make a shift:" he then followed my example, declared he never felt more refreshed in his life, and, giving a bound, said, "he would go and look after his horses."

We then went to look after the horses, which we found not much the worse for having spent the night in the open air. My companion again inserted their heads in the corn-bags, and, leaving the animals to discuss their corn, returned with me to the dingle, where we found the kettle boiling. We sat down, and Belle made tea and did the honours of the meal. The postillion was in high spirits, ate heartily, and, to Belle's evident satisfaction, declared that he had never drank better tea in his life, or indeed any half so good. Breakfast over, he said that he must now go and

harness his horses, as it was high time for him to return to his inn. Belle gave him her hand and wished him farewell: the postillion shook her hand warmly, and was advancing close up to her—for what purpose I cannot say—whereupon Belle, withdrawing her hand, drew herself up with an air which caused the postillion to retreat a step or two with an exceedingly sheepish look. Recovering himself, however, he made a low bow, and proceeded up the path. I attended him, and helped to harness his horses and put them to the vehicle; he then shook me by the hand, and taking the reins and whip mounted to his seat; ere he drove away he thus addressed me: "If ever I forget your kindness and that of the young woman below, dash my buttons. If ever either of you should enter my inn you may depend upon a warm welcome, the best that can be set before you, and no expense to either, for I will give both of you the best of characters to the governor, who is the very best fellow upon all the road. As for your linchpin, I trust it will serve till I get home, when I will take it out and keep it in remembrance of you all the days of my life:" then giving the horses a jerk with his reins, he cracked his whip and drove off.

I returned to the dingle, Belle had removed the breakfast things, and was busy in her own encampment: nothing occurred, worthy of being related, for two hours, at the end of which time Belle departed on a short expedition, and I again found myself alone in the dingle.

CHAPTER II.

THE MAN IN BLACK.—THE EMPEROR OF GERMANY.—NEPOTISM.—DONNA OLYMPIA.—OMNIPOTENCE.—CAMILLO ASTALLI.—THE FIVE PROPOSITIONS.

In the evening I received another visit from the man in black. I had been taking a stroll in the neighbourhood, and was sitting in the dingle in rather a listless manner, scarcely knowing how to employ myself; his coming, therefore, was by no means disagreeable to me. I produced the hollands and glass from my tent, where Isopel Berners had requested me to deposit them, and also some lump sugar, then taking the gotch I fetched water from the spring, and, sitting down, begged the man in black to help himself; he was not slow in complying with my desire, and prepared for himself a glass of hollands and water with a lump of sugar in it. After he had taken two or three sips with evident satisfaction, I, remembering his chuckling exclamation of "Go to Rome for money," when he last left the

dingle, took the liberty, after a little conversation, of reminding him of it, whereupon, with a he! he! he! he replied, "Your idea was not quite so original as I supposed. After leaving you the other night I remembered having read of an emperor of Germany who conceived the idea of applying to Rome for money, and actually put it into practice.

"Urban the Eighth then occupied the papal chair, of the family of the Barbarini, nicknamed the Mosche, or Flies, from the circumstance of bees being their armorial bearing. The Emperor having exhausted all his money in endeavouring to defend the church against Gustavus Adolphus, the great King of Sweden, who was bent on its destruction, applied in his necessity to the Pope for a loan of money. The Pope, however, and his relations, whose cellars were at that time full of the money of the church, which they had been plundering for years, refused to lend him a scudo; whereupon a pasquinade picture was stuck up at Rome, representing the church lying on a bed, gashed with dreadful wounds, and beset all over with flies, which were sucking her, whilst the Emperor of Germany was kneeling before her with a miserable face, requesting a little money towards carrying on the war

against the heretics, to which the poor church was made to say: 'How can I assist you, O my champion, do you not see that the flies have sucked me to the very bones?' Which story," said he, "shows that the idea of going to Rome for money was not quite so original as I imagined the other night, though utterly preposterous.

"This affair," said he, "occurred in what were called the days of nepotism. Certain popes, who wished to make themselves in some degree independent of the cardinals, surrounded themselves with their nephews, and the rest of their family, who sucked the church and Christendom as much as they could, none doing so more effectually than the relations of Urban the Eighth, at whose death, according to the book called the 'Nipotismo di Roma,' there were in the Barbarini family two hundred and twenty-seven governments, abbeys and high dignities; and so much hard cash in their possession that threescore and ten mules were scarcely sufficient to convey the plunder of one of them to Palestrina." He added, however, that it was probable that Christendom fared better whilst the popes were thus independent, as it was less sucked, whereas before and after that period, it was sucked by

hundreds instead of tens, by the cardinals and all their relations, instead of by the pope and his nephews only.

Then, after drinking rather copiously of his hollands, he said that it was certainly no bad idea of the popes to surround themselves with nephews, on whom they bestowed great church dignities, as by so doing they were tolerably safe from poison, whereas a pope, if abandoned to the cardinals, might at any time be made away with by them, provided they thought that he lived too long, or that he seemed disposed to do anything which they disliked; adding, that Ganganelli would never have been poisoned provided he had had nephews about him to take care of his life, and to see that nothing unholy was put into his food, or a bustling stirring brother's wife like Donna Olympia. He then with a he! he! he! asked me if I had ever read the book called the "Nipotismo di Roma;" and on my replying in the negative, he told me that it was a very curious and entertaining book, which he occasionally looked at in an idle hour, and proceeded to relate to me anecdotes out of the "Nipotismo di Roma," about the successor of Urban, Innocent the Tenth, and Donna Olympia, showing how fond he was of her, and how

she cooked his food, and kept the cardinals away from it, and how she and her creatures plundered Christendom, with the sanction of the Pope, until Christendom, becoming enraged, insisted that he should put her away, which he did for a time, putting a nephew—one Camillo Astalli—in her place, in which, however, he did not continue long; for the Pope conceiving a pique against him, banished him from his sight, and recalled Donna Olympia, who took care of his food, and plundered Christendom until Pope Innocent died.

I said that I only wondered that between pope and cardinals the whole system of Rome had not long fallen to the ground, and was told in reply, that its not having fallen was the strongest proof of its vital power, and the absolute necessity for the existence of the system. That the system, notwithstanding its occasional disorders, went on. Popes and cardinals might prey upon its bowels, and sell its interests, but the system survived. The cutting off of this or that member was not able to cause Rome any vital loss; for, as soon as she lost a member, the loss was supplied by her own inherent vitality; though her popes had been poisoned by cardinals, and her cardinals by popes; and though

priests occasionally poisoned popes, cardinals, and each other, after all that had been, and might be, she had still, and would ever have, her priests, cardinals, and pope.

Finding the man in black so communicative and reasonable, I determined to make the best of my opportunity, and learn from him all I could with respect to the papal system, and told him that he would particularly oblige me by telling me who the Pope of Rome was; and received for answer, that he was an old man elected by a majority of cardinals to the papal chair; who, immediately after his election, became omnipotent and equal to God on earth. On my begging him not to talk such nonsense, and asking him how a person could be omnipotent who could not always preserve himself from poison, even when fenced round by nephews, or protected by a bustling woman, he, after taking a long sip of hollands and water, told me that I must not expect too much from omnipotence; for example, that as it would be unreasonable to expect that One above could annihilate the past—for instance, the Seven Years' War, or the French Revolution—though any one who believed in Him would acknowledge Him to be omnipotent, so would it be unreasonable for the faithful to

expect that the Pope could always guard himself from poison. Then, after looking at me for a moment stedfastly, and taking another sip, he told me that popes had frequently done impossibilities; for example. Innocent the Tenth had created a nephew: for, not liking particularly any of his real nephews, he had created the said Camillo Astalli his nephew; asking me, with a he! he! "What but omnipotence could make a young man nephew to a person to whom he was not in the slightest degree related?" On my observing that of course no one believed that the young fellow was really the pope's nephew, though the pope might have adopted him as such, the man in black replied, "that the reality of the nephewship of Camillo Astalli had hitherto never become a point of faith; let, however, the present pope, or any other pope, proclaim that it is necessary to believe in the reality of the nephewship of Camillo Astalli, and see whether the faithful would not believe in it. Who can doubt that," he added, "seeing that they believe in the reality of the five propositions of Jansenius? The Jesuits, wishing to ruin the Jansenists, induced a pope to declare that such and such damnable opinions, which they called five propositions, were to be found in a book written by Jansen,

though in reality no such propositions were to be found there; whereupon the existence of these propositions became forthwith a point of faith to the faithful. Do you then think," he demanded, "that there is one of the faithful who would not swallow, if called upon, the nephewship of Camillo Astalli as easily as the five propositions of Jansenius?" "Surely, then," said I, "the faithful must be a pretty pack of simpletons!" Whereupon the man in black exclaimed, "What! a Protestant, and an infringer of the rights of faith! Here's a fellow, who would feel himself insulted if any one were to ask him how he could believe in the miraculous conception, calling people simpletons who swallow the five propositions of Jansenius, and are disposed, if called upon, to swallow the reality of the nephewship of Camillo Astalli."

I was about to speak, when I was interrupted by the arrival of Belle. After unharnessing her donkey, and adjusting her person a little, she came and sat down by us. In the meantime I had helped my companion to some more hollands and water, and had plunged with him into yet deeper discourse.

CHAPTER III.

NECESSITY OF RELIGION.—THE GREAT INDIAN ONE.—IMAGE-WORSHIP.—SHAKESPEAR.—THE PAT ANSWER.—KRISHNA.—AMEN.

HAVING told the man in black that I should like to know all the truth with regard to the Pope and his system, he assured me he should be delighted to give me all the information in his power; that he had come to the dingle, not so much for the sake of the good cheer which I was in the habit of giving him, as in the hope of inducing me to enlist under the banners of Rome, and to fight in her cause; and that he had no doubt that, by speaking out frankly to me, he ran the best chance of winning me over.

He then proceeded to tell me that the experience of countless ages had proved the necessity of religion; the necessity, he would admit, was only for simpletons; but as nine-tenths of the dwellers upon this earth were simpletons, it would never do for sensible people to run coun-

ter to their folly, but, on the contrary, it was their wisest course to encourage them in it, always provided that, by so doing, sensible people could derive advantage; that the truly sensible people of this world were the priests, who, without caring a straw for religion for its own sake, made use of it as a cord by which to draw the simpletons after them; that there were many religions in this world, all of which had been turned to excellent account by the priesthood; but that the one the best adapted for the purposes of priestcraft was the popish, which, he said, was the oldest in the world and the best calculated to endure. On my inquiring what he meant by saying the popish religion was the oldest in the world, whereas there could be no doubt that the Greek and Roman religion had existed long before it, to say nothing of the old Indian religion still in existence and vigour; he said, with a nod, after taking a sip at his glass, that, between me and him, the popish religion, that of Greece and Rome, and the old Indian system were, in reality, one and the same.

"You told me that you intended to be frank," said I; "but, however frank you may be, I think you are rather wild."

"We priests of Rome," said the man in black, "even those amongst us who do not go much abroad, know a great deal about church matters, of which you heretics have very little idea. Those of our brethren of the Propaganda, on their return home from distant missions, not unfrequently tell us very strange things relating to our dear mother; for example, our first missionaries to the East were not slow in discovering and telling to their brethren that our religion and the great Indian one were identical, no more difference between them than between Ram and Rome. Priests, convents, beads, prayers, processions, fastings, penances, all the same, not forgetting anchorites, and vermin, he! he! The pope they found under the title of the grand lama, a sucking child surrounded by an immense number of priests. Our good brethren, some two hundred years ago, had a hearty laugh, which their successors have often re-echoed; they said that helpless suckling and its priests put them so much in mind of their own old man, surrounded by his cardinals, he! he! Old age is second childhood."

"Did they find Christ?" said I.

"They found him too," said the man in black, "that is, they saw his image; he is considered

in India as a pure kind of being, and on that account, perhaps, is kept there rather in the back-ground, even as he is here."

"All this is very mysterious to me," said I.

"Very likely," said the man in black; "but of this I am tolerably sure, and so are most of those of Rome, that modern Rome had its religion from ancient Rome, which had its religion from the East."

"But how?" I demanded.

"It was brought about, I believe, by the wanderings of nations," said the man in black. "A brother of the Propaganda, a very learned man, once told me—I do not mean Mezzofanti, who has not five ideas—this brother once told me that all we of the Old World, from Calcutta to Dublin, are of the same stock, and were originally of the same language, and——"

"All of one religion," I put in.

"All of one religion," said the man in black; "and now follow different modifications of the same religion."

"We Christians are not image-worshippers," said I.

"You heretics are not, you mean," said the man in black; "but you will be put down, just as you have always been, though others may

rise up after you; the true religion is image-worship; people may strive against it, but they will only work themselves to an oil; how did it fare with that Greek Emperor, the Iconoclast, what was his name, Leon the Isaurian? Did not his image-breaking cost him Italy, the fairest province of his empire, and did not ten fresh images start up at home for every one which he demolished? Oh! you little know the craving which the soul sometimes feels after a good bodily image."

"I have indeed no conception of it," said I; "I have an abhorrence of idolatry—the idea of bowing before a graven figure."

"The idea, indeed," said Belle, who had now joined us.

"Did you never bow before that of Shakespear?" said the man in black, addressing himself to me, after a low bow to Belle.

"I don't remember that I ever did," said I, "but even suppose I did?"

"Suppose you did," said the man in black; "shame on you, Mr. Hater of Idolatry; why the very supposition brings you to the ground; you must make figures of Shakespear, must you? then why not of St. Antonio, or Ignacio, or of a greater personage still? I know what

you are going to say," he cried, interrupting me as I was about to speak. "You don't make his image in order to pay it divine honours, but only to look at it, and think of Shakespear; but this looking at a thing in order to think of a person is the very basis of idolatry. Shakespear's works are not sufficient for you; no more are the Bible or the legend of Saint Anthony or Saint Ignacio for us, that is for those of us who believe in them; I tell you, Zingaro, that no religion can exist long which rejects a good bodily image."

"Do you think," said I, "that Shakespear's works would not exist without his image?"

"I believe," said the man in black, "that Shakespear's image is looked at more than his works, and will be looked at, and perhaps adored, when they are forgotten. I am surprised that they have not been forgotten long ago; I am no admirer of them."

"But I can't imagine," said I, "how you will put aside the authority of Moses. If Moses strove against image-worship, should not his doing so be conclusive as to the impropriety of the practice; what higher authority can you have than that of Moses?"

"The practice of the great majority of the

human race," said the man in black, "and the recurrence to image worship, where image worship has been abolished. Do you know that Moses is considered by the church as no better than a heretic, and though, for particular reasons, it has been obliged to adopt his writings, the adoption was merely a sham one, as it never paid the slightest attention to them? No, no, the church was never led by Moses, nor by one mightier than he, whose doctrine it has equally nullified—I allude to Krishna in his second avatar; the church, it is true, governs in his name, but not unfrequently gives him the lie, if he happens to have said anything which it dislikes. Did you never hear the reply which Padre Paolo Segani made to the French Protestant Jean Anthoine Guerin, who had asked him whether it was easier for Christ to have been mistaken in his Gospel, than for the Pope to be mistaken in his decrees?"

"I never heard their names before," said I.

"The answer was pat," said the man in black, "though he who made it was confessedly the most ignorant fellow of the very ignorant order to which he belonged, the Augustine. Christ might err as a man," said he, "but the Pope

can never err, being God." The whole story is related in the Nipotismo.

"I wonder you should ever have troubled yourselves with Christ at all," said I.

"What was to be done?" said the man in black; "the power of that name suddenly came over Europe, like the power of a mighty wind; it was said to have come from Judea, and from Judea it probably came when it first began to agitate minds in these parts; but it seems to have been known in the remote East, more or less for thousands of years previously. It filled people's minds with madness; it was followed by books which were never much regarded, as they contained little of insanity; but the name! what fury that breathed into people! the books were about peace and gentleness, but the name was the most horrible of war-cries—those who wished to uphold old names at first strove to oppose it, but their efforts were feeble, and they had no good war-cry; what was Mars as a war-cry compared with the name of . . . .? It was said that they persecuted terribly, but who said so? The Christians. The Christians could have given them a lesson in the art of persecution, and eventually did so. None but Christians

have ever been good persecutors; well, the old religion succumbed, Christianity prevailed, for the ferocious is sure to prevail over the gentle."

"I thought," said I, "you stated a little time ago that the Popish religion and the ancient Roman are the same?"

"In every point but that name, that Krishna and the fury and love of persecution which it inspired," said the man in black. "A hot blast came from the East, sounding Krishna; it absolutely maddened people's minds, and the people would call themselves his children; we will not belong to Jupiter any longer, we will belong to Krishna; and they did belong to Krishna, that is in name, but in nothing else; for who ever cared for Krishna in the Christian world, or who ever regarded the words attributed to Him, or put them in practice?"

"Why, we Protestants regard his words, and endeavour to practise what they enjoin as much as possible."

"But you reject his image," said the man in black; "better reject his words than his image: no religion can exist long which rejects a good bodily image. Why, the very negro barbarians of High Barbary could give you a lesson on that

point; they have their fetish images, to which they look for help in their afflictions; they have likewise a high priest, whom they call . . . . "

"Mumbo Jumbo," said I; "I know all about him already."

"How came you to know anything about him?" said the man in black, with a look of some surprise.

"Some of us poor Protestant tinkers," said I, "though we live in dingles, are also acquainted with a thing or two."

"I really believe you are," said the man in black, staring at me; "but, in connection with this Mumbo Jumbo, I could relate to you a comical story about a fellow, an English servant, I once met at Rome."

"It would be quite unnecessary," said I; "I would much sooner hear you talk about Krishna, his words and image."

"Spoken like a true heretic," said the man in black; "one of the faithful would have placed his image before his words; for what are all the words in the world compared with a good bodily image?"

"I believe you occasionally quote his words?" said I.

"He! he!" said the man in black; "occasionally."

"For example," said I, "upon this rock I will found my church."

"He! he!" said the man in black; "you must really become one of us."

"Yet you must have had some difficulty in getting the rock to Rome?"

"None whatever," said the man in black; "faith can remove mountains, to say nothing of rocks—ho! ho!"

"But I cannot imagine," said I, "what advantage you could derive from perverting those words of Scripture in which the Saviour talks about eating his body."

"I do not know, indeed, why we troubled our heads about the matter at all," said the man in black; "but when you talk about perverting the meaning of the text, you speak ignorantly, Mr. Tinker; when he whom you call the Saviour gave his followers the sop, and bade them eat it, telling them it was his body, he delicately alluded to what it was incumbent upon them to do after his death, namely, to eat his body."

"You do not mean to say that he intended they should actually eat his body?"

"Then you suppose ignorantly," said the man

in black; "eating the bodies of the dead was a heathenish custom, practised by the heirs and legatees of people who left property; and this custom is alluded to in the text."

"But what has the New Testament to do with heathen customs," said I, "except to destroy them?"

"More than you suppose," said the man in black. "We priests of Rome, who have long lived at Rome, know much better what the New Testament is made of than the heretics and their theologians, not forgetting their Tinkers; though I confess some of the latter have occasionally surprised us—for example, Bunyan. The New Testament is crowded with allusions to heathen customs, and with words connected with pagan sorcery. Now, with respect to words, I would fain have you, who pretend to be a philologist, tell me the meaning of Amen?"

I made no answer.

"We, of Rome," said the man in black, "know two or three things of which the heretics are quite ignorant; for example, there are those amongst us—those, too, who do not pretend to be philologists—who know what amen is, and, moreover, how we got it. We got it from our ancestors, the priests of ancient Rome; and

they got the word from their ancestors of the East, the priests of Buddh and Brahma."

"And what is the meaning of the word?" I demanded.

"Amen," said the man in black, "is a modification of the old Hindoo formula, Omani batsikhom, by the almost ceaseless repetition of which the Indians hope to be received finally to the rest or state of forgetfulness of Buddh or Brahma; a foolish practice you will say, but are you heretics much wiser, who are continually sticking amen to the end of your prayers, little knowing when you do so, that you are consigning yourselves to the repose of Buddh? Oh what hearty laughs our missionaries have had when comparing the eternally sounding Eastern gibberish of Omani batsikhom, Omani batsikhom, and the Ave Maria and Amen Jesus of our own idiotical devotees."

"I have nothing to say about the Ave Marias and Amens of your superstitious devotees," said I; "I dare say that they use them nonsensically enough, but in putting Amen to the end of a prayer, we merely intend to express, 'So let it be.'"

"It means nothing of the kind," said the man in black; "and the Hindoos might just as

well put your national oath at the end of their prayers, as perhaps they will after a great many thousand years, when English is forgotten, and only a few words of it remembered by dim tradition without being understood. How strange if, after the lapse of four thousand years, the Hindoos should damn themselves to the blindness so dear to their present masters, even as their masters at present consign themselves to the forgetfulness so dear to the Hindoos; but my glass has been empty for a considerable time; perhaps Bellissima Biondina," said he, addressing Belle, "you will deign to replenish it?"

"I shall do no such thing," said Belle, "you have drank quite enough, and talked more than enough, and to tell you the truth I wish you would leave us alone."

"Shame on you, Belle," said I, "consider the obligations of hospitality."

"I am sick of that word," said Belle, "you are so frequently misusing it; were this place not Mumpers' Dingle, and consequently as free to the fellow as ourselves, I would lead him out of it."

"Pray be quiet, Belle," said I. "You had better help yourself," said I, addressing myself

to the man in black, "the lady is angry with you."

"I am sorry for it," said the man in black; "if she is angry with me, I am not so with her, and shall be always proud to wait upon her; in the meantime I will wait upon myself."

CHAPTER IV.

THE PROPOSAL.—THE SCOTCH NOVEL.—LATITUDE.—MIRACLES.—PESTILENT HERETICS.—OLD FRASER.—WONDERFUL TEXTS.—NO ARMENIAN.

THE man in black having helped himself to some more of his favourite beverage, and tasted it, I thus addressed him: "The evening is getting rather advanced, and I can see that this lady, pointing to Belle, is anxious for her tea, which she prefers to take cosily and comfortably with me in the dingle; the place, it is true, is as free to you as to ourselves, nevertheless, as we are located here by necessity, whilst you merely come as a visitor, I must take the liberty of telling you that we shall be glad to be alone, as soon as you have said what you have to say, and have finished the glass of refreshment at present in your hand. I think you said some time ago that one of your motives for coming hither was to induce me to enlist under the banner of Rome. I wish to know whether that was really the case?"

"Decidedly so," said the man in black; "I come here principally in the hope of enlisting you in our regiment, in which I have no doubt you could do us excellent service."

"Would you enlist my companion as well?" I demanded.

"We should be only too proud to have her among us, whether she comes with you or alone," said the man in black, with a polite bow to Belle.

"Before we give you an answer," I replied, "I would fain know more about you; perhaps you will declare your name?"

"That I will never do," said the man in black; "no one in England knows it but myself, and I will not declare it, even in a dingle; as for the rest, *Sono un Prete Cattolico Appostolico* —that is all that many a one of us can say for himself, and it assuredly means a great deal."

"We will now proceed to business," said I. "You must be aware that we English are generally considered a self-interested people."

"And with considerable justice," said the man in black, drinking. "Well, you are a person of acute perception, and I will presently make it evident to you that it would be to your interest to join with us. You are at

present, evidently, in very needy circumstances, and are lost, not only to yourself, but the world; but should you enlist with us, I could find you an occupation not only agreeable, but one in which your talents would have free scope. I would introduce you in the various grand houses here in England, to which I have myself admission, as a surprising young gentleman of infinite learning, who by dint of study has discovered that the Roman is the only true faith. I tell you confidently that our popish females would make a saint, nay a God of you; they are fools enough for anything. There is one person in particular with whom I should wish to make you acquainted, in the hope that you would be able to help me to perform good service to the holy see. He is a gouty old fellow, of some learning, residing in an old hall, near the great western seaport, and is one of the very few amongst the English Catholics possessing a grain of sense. I think you could help us to govern him, for he is not unfrequently disposed to be restive, asks us strange questions—occasionally threatens us with his crutch; and behaves so that we are often afraid that we shall lose him, or, rather, his property, which he has bequeathed to us, and which is enormous. I am sure that

you could help us to deal with him; sometimes with your humour, sometimes with your learning, and perhaps occasionally with your fists."

"And in what manner would you provide for my companion?" said I.

"We would place her at once," said the man in black, "in the house of two highly respectable Catholic ladies in this neighbourhood, where she would be treated with every care and consideration till her conversion should be accomplished in a regular manner; we would then remove her to a female monastic establishment, where, after undergoing a year's probation, during which time she would be instructed in every elegant accomplishment, she should take the veil. Her advancement would speedily follow, for, with such a face and figure, she would make a capital lady abbess, especially in Italy, to which country she would probably be sent; ladies of her hair and complexion—to say nothing of her height—being a curiosity in the south. With a little care and management she could soon obtain a vast reputation for sanctity; and who knows but after her death she might become a glorified saint—he! he! Sister Maria Theresa, for that is the name I propose you should bear. Holy Mother Maria Theresa—glorified and celestial

saint, I have the honour of drinking to your health," and the man in black drank.

"Well, Belle," said I, "what have you to say to the gentleman's proposal?"

"That if he goes on in this way I will break his glass against his mouth."

"You have heard the lady's answer," said I.

"I have," said the man in black, "and shall not press the matter. I can't help, however, repeating that she would make a capital lady abbess; she would keep the nuns in order, I warrant her; no easy matter! Break the glass against my mouth—he! he! How she would send the holy utensils flying at the nuns' heads occasionally, and just the person to wring the nose of Satan should he venture to appear one night in her cell in the shape of a handsome black man. No offence, madam, no offence, pray retain your seat," said he, observing that Belle had started up; "I mean no offence. Well, if you will not consent to be an abbess, perhaps you will consent to follow this young Zingaro, and to co-operate with him and us. I am a priest, madam, and can join you both in an instant, *connubio stabili*, as I suppose the knot has not been tied already."

"Hold your mumping gibberish," said Belle,

"and leave the dingle this moment, for though 't is free to every one, you have no right to insult me in it."

"Pray be pacified," said I to Belle, getting up, and placing myself between her and the man in black, "he will presently leave, take my word for it—there, sit down again," said I, as I led her to her seat; then, resuming my own, I said to the man in black: "I advise you to leave the dingle as soon as possible."

"I should wish to have your answer to my proposal first," said he.

"Well, then, here you shall have it: I will not entertain your proposal; I detest your schemes: they are both wicked and foolish."

"Wicked," said the man in black, "have they not—he! he!—the furtherance of religion in view?"

"A religion," said I, "in which you yourself do not believe, and which you contemn."

"Whether I believe in it or not," said the man in black, "it is adapted for the generality of the human race; so I will forward it, and advise you to do the same. It was nearly extirpated in these regions, but it is springing up again, owing to circumstances. Radicalism is a good friend to us; all the liberals laud up our

system out of hatred to the Established Church, though our system is ten times less liberal than the Church of England. Some of them have really come over to us. I myself confess a baronet who presided over the first radical meeting ever held in England—he was an atheist when he came over to us, in the hope of mortifying his own church—but he is now—ho! ho!—a real Catholic devotee—quite afraid of my threats; I make him frequently scourge himself before me. Well, Radicalism does us good service, especially amongst the lower classes, for Radicalism chiefly flourishes amongst them; for though a baronet or two may be found amongst the radicals, and perhaps as many lords—fellows who have been discarded by their own order for clownishness, or something they have done—it incontestably flourishes best among the lower orders. Then the love of what is foreign is a great friend to us; this love is chiefly confined to the middle and upper classes. Some admire the French, and imitate them; others must needs be Spaniards, dress themselves up in a zamarra, stick a cigar in their mouths, and say, 'Carajo.' Others would pass for Germans; he! he! the idea of any one wishing to pass for a German! but what has

done us more service than anything else in these regions—I mean amidst the middle classes—has been the novel, the Scotch novel. The good folks, since they have read the novels, have become Jacobites; and, because all the Jacobs were Papists, the good folks must become Papists also, or, at least, papistically inclined. The very Scotch Presbyterians, since they have read the novels, are become all but Papists; I speak advisedly, having lately been amongst them. There 's a trumpery bit of a half papist sect, called the Scotch Episcopalian Church, which lay dormant and nearly forgotten for upwards of a hundred years, which has of late got wonderfully into fashion in Scotland, because, forsooth, some of the long-haired gentry of the novels were said to belong to it, such as Montrose and Dundee; and to this the Presbyterians are going over in throngs, traducing and vilifying their own forefathers, or denying them altogether, and calling themselves descendants of—ho! ho! ho!—Scottish Cavaliers!!! I have heard them myself repeating snatches of Jacobite ditties about 'Bonnie Dundee,' and—

"'Come, fill up my cup, and fill up my can,
And saddle my horse, and call up my man.'

There 's stuff for you! Not that I object to

the first part of the ditty. It is natural enough that a Scotchman should cry, 'Come, fill up my cup!' more especially if he 's drinking at another person's expense—all Scotchmen being fond of liquor at free cost: but 'Saddle his horse!!!' —for what purpose I would ask? Where is the use of saddling a horse, unless you can ride him? and where was there ever a Scotchman who could ride?"

"Of course you have not a drop of Scotch blood in your veins," said I, "otherwise you would never have uttered that last sentence."

"Don't be too sure of that," said the man in black; "you know little of Popery if you imagine that it cannot extinguish love of country, even in a Scotchman. A thorough-going Papist—and who more thorough-going than myself—cares nothing for his country; and why should he? he belongs to a system, and not to a country."

"One thing," said I, "connected with you, I cannot understand; you call yourself a thorough-going Papist, yet are continually saying the most pungent things against Popery, and turning to unbounded ridicule those who show any inclination to embrace it."

"Rome is a very sensible old body," said the man in black, "and little cares what her children

say, provided they do her bidding. She knows several things, and amongst others, that no servants work so hard and faithfully as those who curse their masters at every stroke they do. She was not fool enough to be angry with the Miquelets of Alba, who renounced her, and called her 'puta' all the time they were cutting the throats of the Netherlanders. Now, if she allowed her faithful soldiers the latitude of renouncing her, and calling her 'puta' in the market-place, think not she is so unreasonable as to object to her faithful priests occasionally calling her 'puta' in the dingle."

"But," said I, "suppose some one were to tell the world some of the disorderly things which her priests say in the dingle?"

"He would have the fate of Cassandra," said the man in black; "no one would believe him—yes, the priests would: but they would make no sign of belief. They believe in the Alcoran des Cordeliers—that is, those who have read it; but they make no sign."

"A pretty system," said I, "which extinguishes love of country and of everything noble, and brings the minds of its ministers to a parity with those of devils, who delight in nothing but mischief."

"The system," said the man in black, "is a grand one, with unbounded vitality. Compare it with your Protestantism, and you will see the difference. Popery is ever at work, whilst Protestantism is supine. A pretty church, indeed, the Protestant! Why it can't even work a miracle."

"Can your church work miracles?" I demanded.

"That was the very question," said the man in black, "which the ancient British clergy asked of Austin Monk, after they had been fools enough to acknowledge their own inability. 'We don't pretend to work miracles; do you?' 'Oh! dear me, yes,' said Austin; 'we find no difficulty in the matter. We can raise the dead, we can make the blind see; and to convince you, I will give sight to the blind. Here is this blind Saxon, whom you cannot cure, but on whose eyes I will manifest my power, in order to show the difference between the true and the false church;' and forthwith, with the assistance of a handkerchief and a little hot water, he opened the eyes of the barbarian. So we manage matters! A pretty church, that old British church, which could not work miracles—quite as helpless as the modern one. The fools! was birdlime

so scarce a thing amongst them?—and were the properties of warm water so unknown to them, that they could not close a pair of eyes and open them?"

"It 's a pity," said I, "that the British clergy at that interview with Austin, did not bring forward a blind Welshman, and ask the monk to operate upon him."

"Clearly," said the man in black; "that 's what they ought to have done; but they were fools without a single resource." Here he took a sip at his glass.

"But they did not believe in the miracle?" said I.

"And what did their not believing avail them?" said the man in black. "Austin remained master of the field, and they went away holding their heads down, and muttering to themselves. What a fine subject for a painting would be Austin's opening the eyes of the Saxon barbarian, and the discomfiture of the British clergy! I wonder it has not been painted!—he! he!"

"I suppose your church still performs miracles occasionally?" said I.

"It does," said the man in black. "The Rev. . . . . has lately been performing miracles

in Ireland, destroying devils that had got possession of people; he has been eminently successful. In two instances he not only destroyed the devils, but the lives of the people possessed —he! he! Oh! there is so much energy in our system; we are always at work, whilst Protestantism is supine."

"You must not imagine," said I, "that all Protestants are supine; some of them appear to be filled with unbounded zeal. They deal, it is true, not in lying miracles, but they propagate God's Word. I remember only a few months ago, having occasion for a Bible, going to an establishment, the object of which was to send Bibles all over the world. The supporters of that establishment could have no self-interested views; for I was supplied by them with a noble-sized Bible at a price so small as to preclude the idea that it could bring any profit to the vendors."

The countenance of the man in black slightly fell. "I know the people to whom you allude," said he; "indeed, unknown to them, I have frequently been to see them, and observed their ways. I tell you frankly that there is not a set of people in this kingdom who have caused our church so much trouble and uneasiness. I

should rather say that they alone cause us any; for as for the rest, what with their drowsiness, their plethora, their folly, and their vanity, they are doing us anything but mischief. These fellows are a pestilent set of heretics, whom we would gladly see burnt; they are, with the most untiring perseverance, and in spite of divers minatory declarations of the holy father, scattering their books abroad through all Europe, and have caused many people in Catholic countries to think that hitherto their priesthood have endeavoured, as much as possible, to keep them blinded. There is one fellow amongst them for whom we entertain a particular aversion; a big, burly parson, with the face of a lion, the voice of a buffalo, and a fist like a sledge-hammer. The last time I was there, I observed that his eye was upon me, and I did not like the glance he gave me at all; I observed him clench his fist, and I took my departure as fast as I conveniently could. Whether he suspected who I was, I know not; but I did not like his look at all, and do not intend to go again."

"Well, then," said I, "you confess that you have redoubtable enemies to your plans in these regions, and that even amongst the ecclesiastics

there are some widely different from those of the plethoric and Platitude schools."

"It is but too true," said the man in black; "and if the rest of your church were like them we should quickly bid adieu to all hope of converting these regions, but we are thankful to be able to say that such folks are not numerous; there are, moreover, causes at work quite sufficient to undermine even their zeal. Their sons return at the vacations, from Oxford and Cambridge, puppies, full of the nonsense which they have imbibed from Platitude professors; and this nonsense they retail at home, where it fails not to make some impression, whilst the daughters scream—I beg their pardons—warble about Scotland's Montrose, and Bonny Dundee, and all the Jacobs; so we have no doubt that their papas' zeal about the propagation of such a vulgar book as the Bible will in a very little time be terribly diminished. Old Rome will win, so you had better join her."

And the man in black drained the last drop in his glass.

"Never," said I, "will I become the slave of Rome."

"She will allow you latitude," said the man

in black; "do but serve her, and she will allow you to call her 'puta' at a decent time and place, her popes occasionally call her 'puta.' A pope has been known to start from his bed at midnight and rush out into the corridor, and call out 'puta' three times in a voice which pierced the Vatican; that pope was . . . ."

"Alexander the Sixth, I dare say," said I; "the greatest monster that ever existed, though the worthiest head which the popish system ever had—so his conscience was not always still. I thought it had been seared with a brand of iron."

"I did not allude to him, but to a much more modern pope," said the man in black; "it is true he brought the word, which is Spanish, from Spain, his native country, to Rome. He was very fond of calling the church by that name, and other popes have taken it up. She will allow you to call her by it if you belong to her."

"I shall call her so," said I, "without belonging to her, or asking her permission."

"She will allow you to treat her as such if you belong to her," said the man in black; "there is a chapel in Rome, where there is a wondrously fair statue—the son of a cardinal—

I mean his nephew—once . . . . Well, she did not cut off his head, but slightly boxed his cheek and bade him go."

"I have read all about that in 'Keysler's Travels,'" said I; "do you tell her that I would not touch her with a pair of tongs, unless to seize her nose."

"She is fond of lucre," said the man in black; "but does not grudge a faithful priest a little private perquisite," and he took out a very handsome gold repeater.

"Are you not afraid," said I, "to flash that watch before the eyes of a poor tinker in a dingle?"

"Not before the eyes of one like you," said the man in black.

"It is getting late," said I; "I care not for perquisites."

"So you will not join us?" said the man in black.

"You have had my answer," said I.

"If I belong to Rome," said the man in black, "why should not you?"

"I may be a poor tinker," said I; "but I may never have undergone what you have. You remember, perhaps, the fable of the fox who had lost his tail?"

The man in black winced, but almost immediately recovering himself, he said, "Well, we can do without you, we are sure of winning."

"It is not the part of wise people," said I. "to make sure of the battle before it is fought: there's the landlord of the public-house, who made sure that his cocks would win, yet the cocks lost the main, and the landlord is little better than a bankrupt."

"People very different from the landlord," said the man in black, "both in intellect and station, think we shall surely win; there are clever machinators among us who have no doubt of our success."

"Well," said I, "I will set the landlord aside, and will adduce one who was in every point a very different person from the landlord, both in understanding and station, he was very fond of laying schemes, and, indeed, many of them turned out successful. His last and darling one, however, miscarried, notwithstanding that by his calculations he had persuaded himself that there was no possibility of its failing—the person that I allude to was old Fraser . . . ."

"Who?" said the man in black, giving a start, and letting his glass fall.

"Old Fraser, of Lovat," said I, "the prince of

all conspirators and machinators; he made sure of placing the Pretender on the throne of these realms. 'I can bring into the field so many men,' said he; 'my son-in-law, Cluny, so many, and likewise my cousin, and my good friend;' then speaking of those on whom the government reckoned for support, he would say, 'So and so are lukewarm, this person is ruled by his wife, who is with us, the clergy are anything but hostile to us, and as for the soldiers and sailors, half are disaffected to King George, and the rest cowards.' Yet, when things came to a trial, this person whom he had calculated upon to join the Pretender did not stir from his home, another joined the hostile ranks, the presumed cowards turned out heroes, and those whom he thought heroes ran away like lusty fellows at Culloden; in a word, he found himself utterly mistaken, and in nothing more than himself; he thought he was a hero, and proved himself nothing more than an old fox; he got up a hollow tree, didn't he, just like a fox?

"'L' opere sue non furon leonine, ma di volpe.'"

The man in black sat silent for a considerable time, and at length answered, in rather a faltering voice, "I was not prepared for this; you have frequently surprised me by your knowledge

of things which I should never have expected any person of your appearance to be acquainted with, but that you should be aware of my name is a circumstance utterly incomprehensible to me. I had imagined that no person in England was acquainted with it; indeed, I don't see how any person should be, I have revealed it to no one, not being particularly proud of it. Yes, I acknowledge that my name is Fraser, and that I am of the blood of that family or clan, of which the rector of our college once said, that he was firmly of opinion that every individual member was either rogue or fool. I was born at Madrid, of pure, *oimè*, Fraser blood. My parents at an early age, took me to —— where they shortly died, not, however, before they had placed me in the service of a cardinal, with whom I continued some years, and who, when he had no further occasion for me, sent me to the college, in the left-hand cloister of which, as you enter, rest the bones of Sir John D . . . .; there, in studying logic and humane letters, I lost whatever of humanity I had retained when discarded by the cardinal. Let me not, however, forget two points,—I am a Fraser, it is true, but not a Flannagan; I may bear the vilest name of Britain, but not of Ireland; I was bred

up at the English house, and there is at —— a house for the education of bog-trotters; I was not bred up at that; beneath the lowest gulf, there is one yet lower; whatever my blood may be, it is at least not Irish; whatever my education may have been, I was not bred at the Irish seminary—on those accounts I am thankful—yes, *per dio!* I am thankful. After some years at college—but why should I tell you my history, you know it already perfectly well, probably much better than myself. I am now a missionary priest labouring in heretic England, like Parsons and Garnet of old, save and except that, unlike them, I run no danger, for the times are changed. As I told you before, I shall cleave to Rome—I must; *no hay remedio*, as they say at Madrid, and I will do my best to further her holy plans—he! he!—but I confess I begin to doubt of their being successful here—you put me out; old Fraser, of Lovat! I have heard my father talk of him; he had a gold-headed cane, with which he once knocked my grandfather down—he was an astute one, but, as you say, mistaken, particularly in himself. I have read his life by Arbuthnot, it is in the library of our college. Farewell! I shall come no more to this dingle—to come would be of no

utility; I shall go and labour elsewhere, though . . . . how you came to know my name, is a fact quite inexplicable—farewell! to you both."

He then arose; and without further salutation departed from the dingle, in which I never saw him again. "How, in the name of wonder, came you to know that man's name?" said Belle, after he had been gone some time.

"I, Belle? I knew nothing of the fellow's name, I assure you."

"But you mentioned his name."

"If I did, it was merely casually, by way of illustration. I was saying how frequently cunning people were mistaken in their calculations, and I adduced the case of old Fraser, of Lovat, as one in point; I brought forward his name, because I was well acquainted with his history, from having compiled and inserted it in a wonderful work, which I edited some months ago, entitled 'Newgate Lives and Trials,' but without the slightest idea that it was the name of him who was sitting with us; he, however, thought that I was aware of his name. Belle! Belle! for a long time I doubted in the truth of Scripture, owing to certain conceited discourses which I had heard from certain conceited individuals, but now I begin to believe firmly; what

wonderful texts there are in Scripture, Belle! 'The wicked trembleth where—where . . . .'"

"'They were afraid where no fear was; thou hast put them to confusion, because God hath despised them,'" said Belle; "I have frequently read it before the clergyman in the great house of Long Melford. But if you did not know the man's name, why let him go away supposing that you did?"

"Oh, if he was fool enough to make such a mistake, I was not going to undeceive him—no, no! Let the enemies of old England make the most of all their blunders and mistakes, they will have no help from me; but enough of the fellow, Belle, let us now have tea, and after that . . . ."

"No Armenian," said Belle; "but I want to ask a question: pray are all people of that man's name either rogues or fools?"

"It is impossible for me to say, Belle, this person being the only one of the name I have ever personally known. I suppose there are good and bad, clever and foolish, amongst them, as amongst all large bodies of people; however, after the trib ehad been governed for upwards of thirty years by such a person as old Fraser, it were no wonder if the greater part had become

either rogues or fools: he was a ruthless tyrant, Belle, over his own people, and by his cruelty and rapaciousness must either have stunned them into an apathy approaching to idiocy, or made them artful knaves in their own defence. The qualities of parents are generally transmitted to their descendants—the progeny of trained pointers are almost sure to point, even without being taught: if, therefore, all Frasers are either rogues or fools, as this person seems to insinuate, it is little to be wondered at, their parents or grandparents having been in the training-school of old Fraser! but enough of the old tyrant and his slaves. Belle, prepare tea this moment, or dread my anger. I have not a gold-headed cane like old Fraser of Lovat, but I have, what some people would dread much more, an Armenian rune-stick."

CHAPTER V.

FRESH ARRIVALS.—PITCHING THE TENT.—CERTIFICATED WIFE.—HIGH-FLYING NOTIONS.

On the following morning, as I was about to leave my tent, I heard the voice of Belle at the door, exclaiming "Sleepest thou, or wakest thou?" "I was never more awake in my life," said I, going out. "What is the matter?" "He of the horse-shoe," said she, "Jasper, of whom I have heard you talk, is above there on the field with all his people; I went about a quarter of an hour ago to fill the kettle at the spring, and saw them arriving." "It is well," said I; "have you any objection to asking him and his wife to breakfast?" "You can do as you please," said she; "I have cups enough, and have no objection to their company." "We are the first occupiers of the ground," said I, "and, being so, should consider ourselves in the light of hosts, and do our best to practise

the duties of hospitality." "How fond you are of using that word," said Belle, "if you wish to invite the man and his wife, do so, without more ado; remember, however, that I have not cups enough, nor indeed tea enough, for the whole company." Thereupon hurrying up the ascent, I presently found myself outside the dingle. It was as usual a brilliant morning, the dewy blades of the rye-grass which covered the plain sparkled brightly in the beams of the sun, which had probably been about two hours above the horizon. A rather numerous body of my ancient friends and allies occupied the ground in the vicinity of the mouth of the dingle. About five yards on the right I perceived Mr. Petulengro busily employed in erecting his tent; he held in his hand an iron bar, sharp at the bottom, with a kind of arm projecting from the top for the purpose of supporting a kettle or cauldron over the fire, and which is called in the Romanian language "Kekauviskoe saster." With the sharp end of this Mr. Petulengro was making holes in the earth at about twenty inches' distance from each other, into which he inserted certain long rods with a considerable bend towards the top, which constituted no less than the timbers of the tent, and the supporters of

the canvas. Mrs. Petulengro, and a female with a crutch in her hand, whom I recognised as Mrs. Chikno, sat near him on the ground, whilst two or three children, from six to ten years old, who composed the young family of Mr. and Mrs. Petulengro, were playing about.

"Here we are, brother," said Mr. Petulengro, as he drove the sharp end of the bar into the ground; "here we are, and plenty of us—Bute dosta Romany chals."

"I am glad to see you all," said I; "and particularly you, madam," said I, making a bow to Mrs. Petulengro; "and you also, madam," taking off my hat to Mrs. Chikno.

"Good day to you, sir," said Mrs. Petulengro; "you look as usual, charmingly, and speak so, too; you have not forgot your manners."

"It is not all gold that glitters," said Mrs. Chikno. "However, good-morrow to you, young rye."

"I do not see Tawno," said I, looking around; "where is he?"

"Where, indeed!" said Mrs. Chikno; "I don't know; he who countenances him in the roving line can best answer."

"He will be here anon," said Mr. Petulengro; "he has merely ridden down a by-road to show

a farmer a two-year-old colt; she heard me give him directions, but she can't be satisfied."

"I can't, indeed," said Mrs. Chikno.

"And why not, sister?"

"Because I place no confidence in your words, brother; as I said before, you countenances him."

"Well," said I, "I know nothing of your private concerns; I am come on an errand. Isopel Berners, down in the dell there, requests the pleasure of Mr. and Mrs. Petulengro's company at breakfast. She will be happy also to see you, madam," said I, addressing Mrs. Chikno.

"Is that young female your wife, young man?" said Mrs. Chikno.

"My wife?" said I.

"Yes, young man, your wife, your lawful certificated wife."

"No," said I, "she is not my wife."

"Then I will not visit with her," said Mrs. Chikno; "I countenance nothing in the roving line."

"What do you mean by the roving line?" I demanded.

"What do I mean by the roving line? Why, by it I mean such conduct as is not tatcheno. When ryes and rawnies lives together in dingles,

without being certificated, I calls such behaviour being tolerably deep in the roving line, everything savouring of which I am determined not to sanctify. I have suffered too much by my own certificated husband's outbreaks in that line to afford anything of the kind the slightest shadow of countenance."

"It is hard that people may not live in dingles together without being suspected of doing wrong," said I.

"So it is," said Mrs. Petulengro, interposing; "and, to tell you the truth, I am altogether surprised at the illiberality of my sister's remarks. I have often heard say, that is in good company —and I have kept good company in my time— that suspicion is king's evidence of a narrow and uncultivated mind; on which account I am suspicious of nobody, not even of my own husband, whom some people would think I have a right to be suspicious of, seeing that on his account I once refused a lord; but ask him whether I am suspicious of him, and whether I seeks to keep him close tied to my apron-string; he will tell you nothing of the kind; but that, on the contrary, I always allows him an agreeable latitude, permitting him to go where he pleases, and to converse with any one to whose manner of speaking he may take a

fancy. But I have had the advantage of keeping good company, and therefore . . . . "

"Meklis," said Mrs. Chikno, "pray drop all that, sister; I believe I have kept as good company as yourself; and with respect to that offer with which you frequently fatigue those who keeps company with you, I believe, after all, it was something in the roving and uncertificated line."

"In whatever line it was," said Mrs. Petulengro, "the offer was a good one. The young duke—for he was not only a lord, but a duke too—offered to keep me a fine carriage, and to make me his second wife; for it is true that he had another who was old and stout, though mighty rich, and highly good natured; so much so, indeed, that the young lord assured me that she would have no manner of objection to the arrangement; more especially if I would consent to live in the same house with her, being fond of young and cheerful society. So you see . . . "

"Yes, yes," said Mrs. Chikno, "I see, what I before thought, that it was altogether in the uncertificated line."

"Meklis," said Mrs. Petulengro, "I use your own word, madam, which is Romany; for my own part, I am not fond of using Romany

words, unless I can hope to pass them off for French, which I cannot in the present company. I heartily wish that there was no such language, and do my best to keep it away from my children, lest the frequent use of it should altogether confirm them in low and vulgar habits. I have four children, madam, but . . . .

"I suppose by talking of your four children you wish to check me for having none," said Mrs. Chikno, bursting into tears; "if I have no children, sister, it is no fault of mine, it is—but why do I call you sister," said she, angrily, "you are no sister of mine, you are a grasni, a regular mare—a pretty sister, indeed, ashamed of your own language. I remember well that by your high-flying notions you drove your own mother . . . ."

"We will drop it," said Mrs. Petulengro; "I do not wish to raise my voice, and to make myself ridiculous. Young gentleman," said she, "pray present my compliments to Miss Isopel Berners, and inform her that I am very sorry that I cannot accept her polite invitation. I am just arrived, and have some slight domestic matters to see to, amongst others, to wash my children's faces; but that in the course of the forenoon, when I have attended to what I have

to do, and have dressed myself, I hope to do myself the honour of paying her a regular visit, you will tell her that with my compliments. With respect to my husband he can answer for himself, as I, not being of a jealous disposition, never interferes with his matters."

"And tell Miss Berners," said Mr. Petulengro, "that I shall be happy to wait upon her in company with my wife as soon as we are regularly settled: at present I have much on my hands, having not only to pitch my own tent, but this here jealous woman's, whose husband is absent on my business."

Thereupon I returned to the dingle, and without saying anything about Mrs. Chikno's observations, communicated to Isopel the messages of Mr. and Mrs. Petulengro; Isopel made no other reply than by replacing in her coffer two additional cups and saucers, which, in expectation of company, she had placed upon the board. The kettle was by this time boiling. We sat down, and as we breakfasted, I gave Isopel Berners another lesson in the Armenian language.

CHAPTER VI.

THE PROMISED VISIT.—ROMAN FASHION.—WIZARD AND WITCH.—CATCHING AT WORDS.—THE TWO FEMALES.—DRESSING OF HAIR.—THE NEW ROADS.—BELLE'S ALTERED APPEARANCE.—HERSELF AGAIN.

About mid-day Mr. and Mrs. Petulengro came to the dingle to pay the promised visit. Belle, at the time of their arrival, was in her tent, but I was at the fire-place, engaged in hammering part of the outer-tire, or defence, which had come off from one of the wheels of my vehicle. On perceiving them I forthwith went to receive them. Mr. Petulengro was dressed in Roman fashion, with a somewhat smartly-cut sporting-coat, the buttons of which were half-crowns—and a waistcoat, scarlet and black, the buttons of which were spaded half-guineas; his breeches were of a stuff half velveteen, half corduroy, the cords exceedingly broad. He had leggings of buff cloth, furred at the bottom; and upon his feet were highlows. Under his left arm was a long black whalebone riding-whip, with a red

lash, and an immense silver knob. Upon his head was a hat with a high peak, somewhat of the kind which the Spaniards call *calané*, so much in favour with the bravos of Seville and Madrid. Now when I have added that Mr. Petulengro had on a very fine white holland shirt, I think I have described his array. Mrs. Petulengro—I beg pardon for not having spoken of her first—was also arrayed very much in the Roman fashion. Her hair, which was exceedingly black and lustrous, fell in braids on either side of her head. In her ears were rings, with long drops of gold. Round her neck was a string of what seemed very much like very large pearls, somewhat tarnished, however, and apparently of considerable antiquity. "Here we are, brother," said Mr. Petulengro, "here we are, come to see you—wizard and witch, witch and wizard:—

> "'There 's a chovahanee, and a chovahano,
> The nav se len is Petulengro.'"

"Hold your tongue, sir," said Mrs. Petulengro; "you make me ashamed of you with your vulgar ditties. We are come a visiting now, and everything low should be left behind."

"True," said Mr. Petulengro; "why bring

what 's low to the dingle, which is low enough already ?"

"What, are you a catcher at words ?" said I. "I thought that catching at words had been confined to the pothouse farmers, and village witty bodies."

"All fools," said Mrs. Petulengro, "catch at words, and very naturally, as by so doing they hope to prevent the possibility of rational conversation. Catching at words confined to pothouse farmers and village witty bodies ! No, nor to Jasper Petulengro. Listen for an hour or two to the discourse of a set they call newspaper editors, and if you don't go out and eat grass, as a dog does when he is sick, I am no female woman. The young lord whose hand I refused when I took up with wise Jasper, once brought two of them to my mother's tan, when hankering after my company ; they did nothing but carp at each other's words, and a pretty hand they made of it. Ill-favoured dogs they were ; and their attempts at what they called wit almost as unfortunate as their countenances."

"Well," said I, "madam, we will drop all catchings and carpings for the present. Pray take your seat on this stool, whilst I go and announce to Miss Isopel Berners your arrival."

Thereupon I went to Belle's habitation, and informed her that Mr. and Mrs. Petulengro had paid us a visit of ceremony, and were awaiting her at the fire-place. "Pray go and tell them that I am busy," said Belle, who was engaged with her needle. "I do not feel disposed to take part in any such nonsense." "I shall do no such thing," said I, "and I insist upon your coming forthwith, and showing proper courtesy to your visitors. If you do not their feelings will be hurt, and you are aware that I cannot bear that people's feelings should be outraged. Come this moment, or" . . . . "Or what?" said Belle, half smiling. "I was about to say something in Armenian," said I. "Well," said Belle, laying down her work, "I will come." "Stay," said I, "your hair is hanging about your ears, and your dress is in disorder; you had better stay a minute or two to prepare yourself to appear before your visitors, who have come in their very best attire." "No," said Belle, "I will make no alteration in my appearance; you told me to come this moment, and you shall be obeyed."

So Belle and I advanced towards our guests. As we drew nigh Mr. Petulengro took off his hat, and made a profound obeisance to Belle,

whilst Mrs. Petulengo rose from the stool, and made a profound curtsey. Belle, who had flung her hair back over her shoulders, returned their salutations by bending her head, and after slightly glancing at Mr. Petulengro, fixed her large blue eyes full upon his wife. Both these females were very handsome—but how unlike! Belle fair, with blue eyes and flaxen hair; Mrs. Petulengro with olive complexion, eyes black, and hair dark—as dark could be. Belle, in demeanour calm and proud; the gypsy graceful, but full of movement and agitation. And then how different were those two in stature! The head of the Romany rawnie scarcely ascended to the breast of Isopel Berners. I could see that Mrs. Petulengro gazed on Belle with unmixed admiration: so did her husband. "Well," said the latter, "one thing I will say, which is, that there is only one on earth worthy to stand up in front of this she, and that is the beauty of the world, as far as man flesh is concerned, Tawno Chikno; what a pity he did not come down!"

"Tawno Chikno," said Mrs. Petulengro, flaring up; "a pretty fellow he to stand up in front of this gentlewoman, a pity he didn't come, quotha? not at all, the fellow is a sneak, afraid of his wife. He stand up against this

rawnie! why the look she has given me would knock the fellow down."

"It is easier to knock him down with a look than with a fist," said Mr. Petulengro; "that is, if the look comes from a woman: not that I am disposed to doubt that this female gentlewoman is able to knock him down either one way or the other. I have heard of her often enough, and have seen her once or twice, though not so near as now. Well, ma'am, my wife and I are come to pay our respects to you; we are both glad to find that you have left off keeping company with Flaming Bosville, and have taken up with my pal; he is not very handsome, but a better . . . ."

"I take up with your pal, as you call him; you had better mind what you say," said Isopel Berners, "I take up with nobody."

"I merely mean taking up your quarters with him," said Mr. Petulengro; "and I was only about to say a better fellow-lodger you cannot have, or a more instructive, especially if you have a desire to be inoculated with tongues, as he calls them. I wonder whether you and he have had any tongue-work already."

"Have you and your wife anything particular to say, if you have nothing but this kind

of conversation I must leave you, as I am going to make a journey this afternoon, and should be getting ready."

"You must excuse my husband, madam," said Mrs. Petulengro, "he is not overburdened with understanding, and has said but one word of sense since he has been here, which was that we came to pay our respects to you. We have dressed ourselves in our best Roman way, in order to do honour to you; perhaps you do not like it; if so, I am sorry. I have no French clothes, madam, if I had any, madam, I would have come in them in order to do you more honour."

"I like to see you much better as you are," said Belle; "people should keep to their own fashions, and yours is very pretty."

"I am glad you are pleased to think it so, madam; it has been admired in the great city, it created what they call a sensation, and some of the great ladies, the court ladies, imitated it, else I should not appear in it so often as I am accustomed; for I am not very fond of what is Roman, having an imagination that what is Roman is ungenteel; in fact, I once heard the wife of a rich citizen say that gypsies were vulgar creatures. I should have taken her

saying very much to heart, but for her improper pronunciation; she could not pronounce her words, madam, which we gypsies, as they call us, usually can, so I thought she was no very high purchase. You are very beautiful, madam, though you are not dressed as I could wish to see you, and your hair is hanging down in sad confusion; allow me to assist you in arranging your hair, madam; I will dress it for you in our fashion; I would fain see how your hair would look in our poor gypsy fashion; pray allow me, madam?" and she took Belle by the hand.

"I really can do no such thing," said Belle, withdrawing her hand; "I thank you for coming to see me, but . . . ."

"Do allow me to officiate upon your hair, madam," said Mrs. Petulengro, "I should esteem your allowing me a great mark of condescension. You are very beautiful, madam, and I think you doubly so, because you are so fair; I have a great esteem for persons with fair complexions and hair; I have a less regard for people with dark hair and complexions, madam."

"Then why did you turn off the lord, and take up with me?" said Mr. Petulengro; "that same lord was fair enough all about him."

"People do when they are young and silly

what they sometimes repent of when they are of riper years and understandings. I sometimes think that had I not been something of a simpleton, I might at this time be a great court lady. Now, madam," said she, again taking Belle by the hand, "do oblige me by allowing me to plait your hair a little?"

"I have really a good mind to be angry with you," said Belle, giving Mrs. Petulengro a peculiar glance.

"Do allow her to arrange your hair," said I, "she means no harm, and wishes to do you honour; do oblige her and me too, for I should like to see how your hair would look dressed in her fashion."

"You hear what the young rye says?" said Mrs. Petulengro. "I am sure you will oblige the young rye, if not myself. Many people would be willing to oblige the young rye, if he would but ask them; but he is not in the habit of asking favours. He has a nose of his own, which he keeps tolerably exalted; he does not think small-beer of himself, madam; and all the time I have been with him, I never heard him ask a favour before; therefore, madam, I am sure you will oblige him. My sister Ursula would be very willing to oblige him in many things, but he

will not ask her for anything, except for such a favour as a word, which is a poor favour after all. I don't mean for her word; perhaps he will some day ask you for your word. If so . . . ."

"Why here you are, after railing at me for catching at words, catching at a word yourself," said Mr. Petulengro.

"Hold your tongue, sir," said Mrs. Petulengro. "Don't interrupt me in my discourse; if I caught at a word now, I am not in the habit of doing so. I am no conceited body; no newspaper Neddy; no pothouse witty person. I was about to say, madam, that if the young rye asks you at any time for your word, you will do as you deem convenient; but I am sure you will oblige him by allowing me to braid your hair."

"I shall not do it to oblige him," said Belle; "the young rye, as you call him, is nothing to me."

"Well, then, to oblige me," said Mrs. Petulengro; "do allow me to become your poor tire-woman."

"It is great nonsense," said Belle, reddening; "however, as you came to see me, and ask the matter as a particular favour to yourself . . . ."

"Thank you, madam," said Mrs. Petulengro,

leading Belle to the stool; "please to sit down here. Thank you; your hair is very beautiful, madam," she continued, as she proceeded to braid Belle's hair; "so is your countenance. Should you ever go to the great city, among the grand folks, you would make a sensation, madam. I have made one myself, who am dark; the chi she is kauley, which last word signifies black, which I am not, though rather dark. There 's no colour like white, madam; it 's so lasting, so genteel. Gentility will carry the day, madam, even with the young rye. He will ask words of the black lass, but beg the word of the fair."

In the meantime Mr. Petulengro and myself entered into conversation. "Any news stirring, Mr. Petulengro?" said I. "Have you heard anything of the great religious movements?"

"Plenty," said Mr. Petulengro; "all the religious people, more especially the Evangelicals —those that go about distributing tracts—are very angry about the fight between Gentleman Cooper and White-headed Bob, which they say ought not to have been permitted to take place; and then they are trying all they can to prevent the fight between the lion and the dogs, which they say is a disgrace to a Christian country. Now, I can't say that I have any quarrel with

the religious party and the Evangelicals; they are always civil to me and mine, and frequently give us tracts, as they call them, which neither I nor mine can read; but I cannot say that I approve of any movements, religious or not, which have in aim to put down all life and manly sport in this here ccountry."

"Anything else?" said I.

"People are becoming vastly sharp," said Mr. Petulengro; "and I am told that all the old-fashioned, good-tempered constables are going to be set aside, and a paid body of men to be established, who are not to permit a tramper or vagabond on the roads of England;—and talking of roads, puts me in mind of a strange story I heard two nights ago, whilst drinking some beer at a public-house, in company with my cousin Sylvester. I had asked Tawno to go, but his wife would not let him. Just opposite me, smoking their pipes, were a couple of men, something like engineers, and they were talking of a wonderful invention which was to make a wonderful alteration in England; inasmuch as it would set aside all the old roads, which in a little time would be ploughed up, and sowed with corn, and cause all England to be laid down with iron roads, on which

people would go thundering along in vehicles, pushed forward by fire and smoke. Now, brother, when I heard this, I did not feel very comfortable ; for I thought to myself, what a queer place such a road would be to pitch one's tent upon, and how impossible it would be for one's cattle to find a bite of grass upon it ; and I thought likewise of the danger to which one's family would be exposed of being run over and severely scorched by these same flying, fiery vehicles ; so I made bold to say, that I hoped such an invention would never be countenanced, because it was likely to do a great deal of harm. Whereupon, one of the men, giving me a glance, said, without taking the pipe out of his mouth, that for his part, he sincerely hoped that it would take effect ; and if it did no other good than stopping the rambles of gypsies, and other like scamps, it ought to be encouraged. Well, brother, feeling myself insulted, I put my hand into my pocket, in order to pull out money, intending to challenge him to fight for a five-shilling stake, but merely found sixpence, having left all my other money at the tent ; which sixpence was just sufficient to pay for the beer which Sylvester and myself were drinking, of whom I couldn't hope to borrow anything—

'poor as Sylvester' being a by-word amongst us. So, not being able to back myself, I held my peace, and let the Gorgio have it all his own way, who, after turning up his nose at me, went on discoursing about the said invention, saying what a fund of profit it would be to those who knew how to make use of it, and should have the laying down of the new roads, and the shoeing of England with iron. And after he had said this, and much more of the same kind, which I cannot remember, he and his companion got up and walked away; and presently I and Sylvester got up and walked to our camp; and there I lay down in my tent by the side of my wife, where I had an ugly dream of having camped upon an iron road; my tent being overturned by a flying vehicle; my wife's leg injured; and all my affairs put into great confusion."

"Now, madam," said Mrs. Petulengro, "I have braided your hair in our fashion: you look very beautiful, madam; more beautiful, if possible, than before." Belle now rose, and came forward with her tire-woman. Mr. Petulengro was loud in his applause, but I said nothing, for I did not think Belle was improved in appearance by having submitted to the ministry of Mrs.

Petulengro's hand. Nature never intended Belle to appear as a gypsy; she had made her too proud and serious. A more proper part for her was that of a heroine, a queenly heroine,—that of Theresa of Hungary, for example; or, better still, that of Brynhilda the Valkyrie, the beloved of Sigurd, the serpent-killer, who incurred the curse of Odin, because, in the tumult of spears, she sided with the young king, and doomed the old warrior to die, to whom Odin had promised victory.

Belle looked at me for a moment in silence; then turning to Mrs. Petulengro, she said, "You have had your will with me; are you satisfied?" "Quite so, madam," said Mrs. Petulengro, "and I hope you will be so too, as soon as you have looked in the glass." "I have looked in one already," said Belle, "and the glass does not flatter." "You mean the face of the young rye," said Mrs. Petulengro, "never mind him, madam; the young rye, though he knows a thing or two, is not a university, nor a person of universal wisdom. I assure you, that you never looked so well before; and I hope that, from this moment, you will wear your hair in this way." "And who is to braid it in this way?" said Belle, smiling. "I, madam," said Mrs.

Petulengro, "I will braid it for you every morning, if you will but be persuaded to join us. Do so, madam, and I think, if you did, the young rye would do so too." "The young rye is nothing to me, nor I to him," said Belle, "we have staid some time together; but our paths will soon be apart. Now, farewell, for I am about to take a journey." "And you will go out with your hair as I have braided it," said Mrs. Petulengro, "if you do, everybody will be in love with you." "No," said Belle, "hitherto I have allowed you to do what you please, but henceforth I shall have my own way. Come, come," said she, observing that the gypsy was about to speak, "we have had enough of nonsense; whenever I leave this hollow, it will be wearing my hair in my own fashion." "Come, wife," said Mr. Petulengro, "we will no longer intrude upon the rye and rawnie, there is such a thing as being troublesome." Thereupon Mr. Petulengro and his wife took their leave, with many salutations. "Then you are going?" said I, when Belle and I were left alone. "Yes," said Belle, "I am going on a journey; my affairs compel me." "But you will return again?" said I. "Yes," said Belle, "I shall return once more."

"Once more," said I; "what do you mean by once more? The Petulengros will soon be gone, and will you abandon me in this place?" "You were alone here," said Belle, "before I came, and, I suppose, found it agreeable, or you would not have stayed in it." "Yes," said I, "that was before I knew you; but having lived with you here, I should be very loth to live here without you." "Indeed," said Belle, "I did not know that I was of so much consequence to you. Well, the day is wearing away—I must go and harness Traveller to the cart." "I will do that," said I, "or anything else you may wish me. Go and prepare yourself; I will see after Traveller and the cart." Belle departed to her tent, and I set about performing the task I had undertaken. In about half-an-hour Belle again made her appearance—she was dressed neatly and plainly. Her hair was no longer in the Roman fashion, in which Pakomovna had plaited it, but was secured by a comb; she held a bonnet in her hand. "Is there anything else I can do for you?" I demanded. "There are two or three bundles by my tent, which you can put into the cart," said Belle. I put the bundles into the cart, and then led Traveller and the cart up the winding

path, to the mouth of the dingle, near which was Mr. Petulengro's encampment. Belle followed. At the top, I delivered the reins into her hands; we looked at each other stedfastly for some time. Belle then departed, and I returned to the dingle, where, seating myself on my stone, I remained for upwards of an hour in thought.

CHAPTER VII.

THE FESTIVAL.—THE GYPSY SONG.—PIRAMUS OF ROME.—THE SCOTCHMAN.—GYPSY NAMES.

On the following day there was much feasting amongst the Romany chals of Mr. Petulengro's party. Throughout the forenoon the Romany chies did scarcely anything but cook flesh, and the flesh which they cooked was swine's flesh. About two o'clock, the chals and chies dividing themselves into various parties, sat down and partook of the fare, which was partly roasted, partly sodden. I dined that day with Mr. Petulengro and his wife and family, Ursula, Mr. and Mrs. Chikno, and Sylvester and his two children. Sylvester, it will be as well to say, was a widower, and had consequently no one to cook his victuals for him, supposing he had any, which was not always the case, Sylvester's affairs being seldom in a prosperous state. He was noted for his bad success in

trafficking, notwithstanding the many hints which he received from Jasper, under whose protection he had placed himself, even as Tawno Chikno had done, who himself, as the reader has heard on a former occasion, was anything but a wealthy subject, though he was at all times better off than Sylvester, the Lazarus of the Romany tribe.

All our party ate with a good appetite, except myself, who, feeling rather melancholy that day, had little desire to eat. I did not, like the others, partake of the pork, but got my dinner entirely off the body of a squirrel which had been shot the day before by a chal of the name of Piramus, who, besides being a good shot, was celebrated for his skill in playing on the fiddle. During the dinner a horn filled with ale passed frequently around, I drank of it more than once, and felt inspirited by the draughts. The repast concluded, Sylvester and his children departed to their tent, and Mr. Petulengro, Tawno, and myself getting up, went and lay down under a shady hedge, where Mr. Petulengro, lighting his pipe, began to smoke, and where Tawno presently fell asleep. I was about to fall asleep also, when I heard the sound of music and song. Piramus was playing on the

fiddle, whilst Mrs. Chikno, who had a voice of her own, was singing in tones sharp enough, but of great power, a gypsy song :—

POISONING THE PORKER.

By Mrs. Chikno.

To mande shoon ye Romany chals
Who besh in the pus about the yag,
I 'll pen how we drab the baulo,
I 'll pen how we drab the baulo.

We jaws to the drab-engro ker,
Trin horsworth there of drab we lels,
And when to the swety back we wels
We pens we 'll drab the baulo,
We 'll have a drab at a baulo.

And then we kairs the drab opré,
And then we jaws to the farming ker,
To mang a beti habben,
A beti poggado habben.

A rinkeno baulo there we dick,
And then we pens in Romano jib ;
Wust lis odoi opré ye chick,
And the baulo he will lel lis,
The baulo he will lel lis.

Coliko, coliko saulo we
Apopli to the farming ker
Will wel and mang him mullo,
Will wel and mang his truppo.

And so we kairs, and so we kairs ;
The baulo in the rarde mers ;
We mang him on the saulo,
And rig to the tan the baulo.

And then we toves the wendror well
Till sore the wendror iuziou se,
Till kekkeno drab's adrey lis,
Till drab there 's kek adrey lis.

And then his truppo well we hatch,
Kin levinor at the kitchema,
And have a kosko habben,
A kosko Romano habben.

The boshom engro kils, he kils,
The tawnie juva gils, she gils
A puro Romano gillie,
Now shoon the Romano gillie.

Which song I had translated in the following manner, in my younger days, for a lady's album.

Listen to me ye Roman lads, who are seated in the straw about the fire, and I will tell how we poison the porker, I will tell how we poison the porker.

We go to the house of the poison monger,* where we buy three pennies' worth of bane, and when we return to our people we say, we will poison the porker ; we will try and poison the porker.

We then make up the poison, and then we take our

* The apothecary.

way to the house of the farmer, as if to beg a bit of victuals, a little broken victuals.

We see a jolly porker, and then we say in Roman language, "Fling the bane yonder amongst the dirt, and the porker soon will find it, the porker soon will find it."

Early on the morrow, we will return to the farm-house, and beg the dead porker, the body of the dead porker.

And so we do, even so we do; the porker dieth during the night; on the morrow we beg the porker, and carry to the tent the porker.

And then we wash the inside well, till all the inside is perfectly clean, till there's no bane within it, not a poison grain within it.

And then we roast the body well, send for ale to the alehouse, and have a merry banquet, a merry Roman banquet.

The fellow with the fiddle plays, he plays; the little lassie sings, she sings an ancient Roman ditty; now hear the Roman ditty.

SONG OF THE BROKEN CHASTITY.

By Ursula.

Penn'd the Romany chi ké laki dye
"Miry dearie dye mi shom cambri!"
"And savo kair'd tute cambri,
Miry dearie chi, miry Romany chi?"
"O miry dye a boro rye,
A bovalo rye, a gorgiko rye,

Sos kistur pré a pellengo grye,
'Twas yov sos kerdo man cambri."
"Tu tawnie vassavie lubbeny,
Tu chal from miry tan abri;
Had a Romany chal kair'd tute cambri,
Then I had penn'd ke tute chie,
But tu shan a vassavie lubbeny
With gorgikie rat to be cambri.

"There 's some kernel in those songs, brother," said Mr. Petulengro, when the songs and music were over.

"Yes," said I, "they are certainly very remarkable songs. I say, Jasper, I hope you have not been drabbing baulor lately."

"And suppose we have, brother, what then?"

"Why it is a very dangerous practice, to say nothing of the wickedness of it."

"Necessity has no law, brother."

"That is true," said I, "I have always said so, but you are not necessitous, and should not drab baulor."

"And who told you we had been drabbing baulor?"

"Why, you have had a banquet of pork, and after the banquet, Mrs. Chikno sang a song about drabbing baulor, so I naturally thought you might have lately been engaged in such a thing."

"Brother, you occasionally utter a word or two of common sense. It was natural for you to suppose, after seeing that dinner of pork, and hearing that song, that we had been drabbing baulor; I will now tell you that we have not been doing so. What have you to say to that?"

"That I am very glad of it."

"Had you tasted that pork, brother, you would have found that it was sweet and tasty, which balluva that is drabbed can hardly be expected to be. We have no reason to drab baulor at present, we have money and credit; but necessity has no law. Our forefathers occasionally drabbed baulor, some of our people may still do such a thing, but only from compulsion."

"I see," said I; "and at your merry meetings you sing songs upon the compulsatory deeds of your people, alias their villainous actions; and, after all, what would the stirring poetry of any nation be, but for its compulsatory deeds? Look at the poetry of Scotland, the heroic part, founded almost entirely on the villainous deeds of the Scotch nation; Cow-stealing, for example, which is very little better than drabbing baulor; whilst the softer part is mostly about the slips of its females among the broom, so that no upholder of Scotch poetry could censure

Ursula's song as indelicate, even if he understood it. What do you think, Jasper?"

"I think, brother, as I before said, that occasionally you utter a word of common sense; you were talking of the Scotch, brother; what do you think of a Scotchman finding fault with Romany?"

"A Scotchman finding fault with Romany, Jasper! Oh dear, but you joke, the thing could never be."

"Yes, and at Piramus's fiddle; what do you think of a Scotchman turning up his nose at Piramus's fiddle?"

"A Scotchman turning up his nose at Piramus's fiddle! nonsense, Jasper."

"Do you know what I most dislike, brother?"

"I do not, unless it be the constable, Jasper."

"It is not the constable, it's a beggar on horseback, brother."

"What do you mean by a beggar on horseback?"

"Why, a scamp, brother, raised above his proper place, who takes every opportunity of giving himself fine airs. About a week ago, my people and myself camped on a green by a plantation in the neighbourhood of a great house.

In the evening we were making merry, the girls were dancing, while Piramus was playing on the fiddle a tune of his own composing, to which he has given his own name, Piramus of Rome, and which is much celebrated amongst our people, and from which I have been told that one of the grand gorgio composers, who once heard it, has taken several hints. So, as we were making merry, a great many grand people, lords and ladies, I believe, came from the great house and looked on, as the girls danced to the tune of Piramus of Rome, and seemed much pleased; and when the girls had left off dancing, and Piramus playing, the ladies wanted to have their fortunes told; so I bade Mikailia Chikno, who can tell a fortune when she pleases better than any one else, tell them a fortune, and she, being in a good mind, told them a fortune which pleased them very much. So, after they had heard their fortunes, one of them asked if any of our women could sing; and I told them several could, more particularly Leviathan—you know Leviathan, she is not here now, but some miles distant, she is our best singer, Ursula coming next. So the lady said she should like to hear Leviathan sing, whereupon Leviathan sang the Gudlo pesham, and Piramus played the

tune of the same name, which, as you know, means the honeycomb, the song and the tune being well entitled to the name, being wonderfully sweet. Well, everybody present seemed mighty well pleased with the song and music, with the exception of one person, a carroty-haired Scotch body; how he came there I don't know, but there he was; and, coming forward, he began in Scotch as broad as a barn-door to find fault with the music and the song, saying, that he had never heard viler stuff than either. Well, brother, out of consideration for the civil gentry with whom the fellow had come, I held my peace for a long time, and in order to get the subject changed, I said to Mikailia in Romany, you have told the ladies their fortunes, now tell the gentlemen theirs, quick, quick,—pen lende dukkerin. Well, brother, the Scotchman, I suppose, thinking I was speaking ill of him, fell into a greater passion than before, and catching hold of the word dukkerin—'Dukkerin,' said he, 'what's dukkerin?' 'Dukkerin,' said I, 'is fortune, a man or woman's destiny; don't you like the word?' 'Word! d'ye ca' that a word? a bonnie word,' said he. 'Perhaps you'll tell us what it is in Scotch,' said I, 'in order that we may improve our language by a Scotch word; a

pal of mine has told me that we have taken a great many words from foreign lingos.' 'Why, then, if that be the case, fellow, I will tell you; it is e'en "spaeing,"' said he, very seriously. 'Well, then,' said I, 'I 'll keep my own word, which is much the prettiest—spaeing! spaeing! why, I should be ashamed to make use of the word, it sounds so much like a certain other word;' and then I made a face as if I were unwell. 'Perhaps it 's Scotch also for that?' 'What do ye mean by speaking in that guise to a gentleman?' said he, 'you insolent vagabond, without a name or a country.' 'There you are mistaken,' said I, 'my country is Egypt, but we 'Gyptians, like you Scotch, are rather fond of travelling; and as for name—my name is Jasper Petulengro, perhaps you have a better; what is it?' 'Sandy Macraw.' At that, brother, the gentlemen burst into a roar of laughter, and all the ladies tittered."

"You were rather severe on the Scotchman, Jasper."

"Not at all, brother, and suppose I were, he began first; I am the civilest man in the world, and never interfere with anybody, who lets me and mine alone. He finds fault with Ro-

many, forsooth! why, L—d A'mighty, what's Scotch? He doesn't like our songs; what are his own? I understand them as little as he mine; I have heard one or two of them, and pretty rubbish they seemed. But the best of the joke is, the fellow's finding fault with Piramus's fiddle—a chap from the land of bagpipes finding fault with Piramus's fiddle! Why, I'll back that fiddle against all the bagpipes in Scotland, and Piramus against all the bagpipers; for though Piramus weighs but ten stone, he shall flog a Scotchman of twenty."

"Scotchmen are never so fat as that," said I, "unless, indeed, they have been a long time pensioners of England I say, Jasper, what remarkable names your people have!"

"And what pretty names, brother; there's my own, for example, Jasper; then there's Ambrose and Sylvester; then there's Culvato, which signifies Claude; then there's Piramus, that's a nice name, brother."

"Then there's your wife's name, Pakomovna; then there's Ursula and Morella."

"Then, brother, there's Ercilla."

"Ercilla! the name of the great poet of Spain, how wonderful; then Leviathan."

"The name of a ship, brother; Leviathan was named after a ship, so don't make a wonder out of her. But there's Sanpriel and Synfye."

"Ay, and Clementina and Lavinia, Camillia and Lydia, Curlanda and Orlanda; wherever did they get those names?"

"Where did my wife get her necklace, brother?"

"She knows best, Jasper. I hope . . . ."

"Come, no hoping! She got it from her grandmother, who died at the age of a hundred and three, and sleeps in Coggeshall churchyard. She got it from her mother, who also died very old, and who could give no other account of it than that it had been in the family time out of mind."

"Whence could they have got it?"

"Why, perhaps where they got their names, brother. A gentleman, who had travelled much, once told me that he had seen the sister of it about the neck of an Indian queen."

"Some of your names, Jasper, appear to be church names; your own, for example, and Ambrose, and Sylvester; perhaps you got them from the Papists, in the times of Popery; but where did you get such a name as Piramus, a name of

Grecian romance. Then some of them appear to be Slavonian; for example, Mikailia and Pakomovna. I don't know much of Slavonian; but . . . ."

"What is Slavonian, brother?"

"The family name of certain nations, the principal of which is the Russian, and from which the word slave is originally derived. You have heard of the Russians, Jasper?"

"Yes, brother; and seen some. I saw their crallis at the time of the peace; he was not a bad-looking man for a Russian."

"By the bye, Jasper, I'm half inclined to think that crallis is a Slavish word. I saw something like it in a lil called 'Voltaire's Life of Charles.' How you should have come by such names and words is to me incomprehensible."

"You seem posed, brother."

"I really know very little about you, Jasper."

"Very little indeed, brother. We know very little about ourselves; and you know nothing, save what we have told you; and we have now and then told you things about us which are not exactly true, simply to make a fool

of you, brother. You will say that was wrong; perhaps it was. Well, Sunday will be here in a day or two, when we will go to church, where possibly we shall hear a sermon on the disastrous consequences of lying."

CHAPTER VIII.

THE CHURCH.—THE ARISTOCRATICAL PEW.—DAYS OF YORE.—THE CLERGYMAN.—"IN WHAT WOULD A MAN BE PROFITED?"

When two days had passed, Sunday came; I breakfasted by myself in the solitary dingle; and then, having set things a little to rights, I ascended to Mr. Petulengro's encampment. I could hear church-bells ringing around in the distance, appearing to say, "Come to church, come to church," as clearly as it was possible for church-bells to say. I found Mr. Petulengro seated by the door of his tent, smoking his pipe, in rather an ungenteel undress. "Well, Jasper," said I, "are you ready to go to church; for if you are, I am ready to accompany you?" "I am not ready, brother," said Mr. Petulengro, "nor is my wife; the church, too, to which we shall go is three miles off; so it is of no use to think of going there this morning, as the service would be three-quarters over before we got there; if, however, you are disposed to go in the

afternoon, we are your people." Thereupon I returned to my dingle, where I passed several hours in conning the Welsh Bible, which the preacher, Peter Williams, had given me.

At last I gave over reading, took a slight refreshment, and was about to emerge from the dingle, when I heard the voice of Mr. Petulengro calling me. I went up again to the encampment, where I found Mr. Petulengro, his wife, and Tawno Chikno, ready to proceed to church. Mr. and Mrs. Petulengro were dressed in Roman fashion, though not in the full-blown manner in which they had paid their visit to Isopel and myself. Tawno had on a clean white slop, with a nearly new black beaver, with very broad rims, and the nap exceedingly long. As for myself, I was dressed in much the same manner as that in which I departed from London, having on, in honour of the day, a shirt perfectly clean, having washed one on purpose for the occasion, with my own hands, the day before, in the pond of tepid water in which the newts and efts were in the habit of taking their pleasure. We proceeded for upwards of a mile, by footpaths through meadows and corn-fields; we crossed various stiles; at last, passing over one, we found ourselves in a road, wending along which for a

considerable distance, we at last came in sight of a church, the bells of which had been tolling distinctly in our ears for some time; before, however, we reached the church-yard the bells had ceased their melody. It was surrounded by lofty beech-trees of brilliant green foliage. We entered the gate, Mrs. Petulengro leading the way, and proceeded to a small door near the east end of the church. As we advanced, the sound of singing within the church rose upon our ears. Arrived at the small door, Mrs. Petulengro opened it and entered, followed by Tawno Chikno. I myself went last of all, following Mr. Petulengro, who, before I entered, turned round, and, with a significant nod, advised me to take care how I behaved. The part of the church which we had entered was the chancel; on one side stood a number of venerable old men—probably the neighbouring poor—and on the other a number of poor girls belonging to the village school, dressed in white gowns and straw bonnets, whom two elegant but simply dressed young women were superintending. Every voice seemed to be united in singing a certain anthem, which, notwithstanding it was written neither by Tate nor Brady, contains some of the sublimest words which were ever put together,

not the worst of which are those which burst on our ears as we entered.

> "Every eye shall now behold Him,
> Robed in dreadful majesty;
> Those who set at nought and sold Him,
> Pierced and nailed Him to the tree,
> Deeply wailing,
> Shall the true Messiah see."

Still following Mrs. Petulengro, we proceeded down the chancel and along the aisle; notwithstanding the singing, I could distinctly hear as we passed many a voice whispering, "Here come the gypsies! here come the gypsies!" I felt rather embarrassed, with a somewhat awkward doubt as to where we were to sit; none of the occupiers of the pews, who appeared to consist almost entirely of farmers, with their wives, sons, and daughters, opened a door to admit us. Mrs. Petulengro, however, appeared to feel not the least embarrassment, but tripped along the aisle with the greatest nonchalance. We passed under the pulpit, in which stood the clergyman in his white surplice, and reached the middle of the church, where we were confronted by the sexton dressed in long blue coat, and holding in his hand a wand. This functionary motioned towards the lower end of the church, where

were certain benches, partly occupied by poor people and boys. Mrs. Petulengro, however, with a toss of her head, directed her course to a magnificent pew, which was unoccupied, which she opened and entered, followed closely by Tawno Chikno, Mr. Petulengro, and myself. The sexton did not appear by any means to approve of the arrangement, and as I stood next the door laid his finger on my arm, as if to intimate that myself and companions must quit our aristocratical location. I said nothing, but directed my eyes to the clergyman, who uttered a short and expressive cough; the sexton looked at him for a moment, and then, bowing his head, closed the door—in a moment more the music ceased. I took up a prayer-book, on which was engraved an earl's coronet. The clergyman uttered, "I will arise, and go to my father." England's sublime liturgy had commenced.

Oh what feelings came over me on finding myself again in an edifice devoted to the religion of my country. I had not been in such a place I cannot tell for how long—certainly not for years; and now I had found my way there again, it appeared as if I had fallen asleep in the pew of the old church of pretty D . . . . I had occasionally done so when a child, and had

suddenly woke up. Yes, surely I had been asleep and had woken up; but, no! alas, no! I had not been asleep—at least not in the old church—if I had been asleep I had been walking in my sleep, struggling, striving, learning, and unlearning in my sleep. Years had rolled away whilst I had been asleep — ripe fruit had fallen, green fruit had come on whilst I had been asleep—how circumstances had altered, and above all myself, whilst I had been asleep. No, I had not been asleep in the old church! I was in a pew it is true, but not the pew of black leather, in which I sometimes fell asleep in days of yore, but in a strange pew; and then my companions, they were no longer those of days of yore. I was no longer with my respectable father and mother, and my dear brother, but with the gypsy cral and his wife, and the gigantic Tawno, the Antinous of the dusky people. And what was I myself? No longer an innocent child, but a moody man, bearing in my face, as I knew well, the marks of my strivings and strugglings, of what I had learnt and unlearnt; nevertheless, the general aspect of things brought to my mind what I had felt and seen of yore. There was difference enough it is true, but still there was a simila-

rity—at least I thought so—the church, the clergyman, and the clerk, differing in many respects from those of pretty D . . . , put me strangely in mind of them; and then the words!—by the bye, was it not the magic of the words which brought the dear enchanting past so powerfully before the mind of Lavengro? for the words were the same sonorous words of high import which had first made an impression on his childish ear in the old church of pretty D . . . .

The liturgy was now over, during the reading of which my companions behaved in a most unexceptionable manner, sitting down and rising up when other people sat down and rose, and holding in their hands prayer-books which they found in the pew, into which they stared intently, though I observed that, with the exception of Mrs. Petulengro, who knew how to read a little, they held the books by the top, and not the bottom, as is the usual way. The clergyman now ascended the pulpit, arrayed in his black gown. The congregation composed themselves to attention, as did also my companions, who fixed their eyes upon the clergyman with a certain strange immovable stare, which I believe to be peculiar to their race. The clergyman gave out his text, and began to preach. He was

a tall, gentlemanly man, seemingly between fifty and sixty, with greyish hair; his features were very handsome, but with a somewhat melancholy cast: the tones of his voice were rich and noble, but also with somewhat of melancholy in them. The text which he gave out was the following one, "In what would a man be profited, provided he gained the whole world, and lost his own soul?"

And on this text the clergyman preached long and well: he did not read his sermon, but spoke it extempore; his doing so rather surprised and offended me at first; I was not used to such a style of preaching in a church devoted to the religion of my country. I compared it within my mind with the style of preaching used by the high-church rector in the old church of pretty D . . . ., and I thought to myself it was very different, and being very different I did not like it, and I thought to myself how scandalized the people of D . . . . would have been had they heard it, and I figured to myself how indignant the high-church clerk would have been had any clergyman got up in the church of D . . . . and preached in such a manner. Did it not savour strongly of dissent, methodism, and similar low stuff? Surely it did; why the

Methodist I had heard preach on the heath above the old city, preached in the same manner —at least he preached extempore ; ay, and something like the present clergyman, for the Methodist spoke very zealously and with great feeling, and so did the present clergyman ; so I, of course, felt rather offended with the clergyman for speaking with zeal and feeling. However, long before the sermon was over I forgot the offence which I had taken, and listened to the sermon with much admiration, for the eloquence and powerful reasoning with which it abounded.

Oh how eloquent he was, when he talked of the inestimable value of a man's soul, which he said endured for ever, whilst his body, as every one knew, lasted at most for a very contemptible period of time ; and how forcibly he reasoned on the folly of a man, who, for the sake of gaining the whole world—a thing, he said, which provided he gained he could only possess for a part of the time, during which his perishable body existed—should lose his soul, that is, cause that precious deathless portion of him to suffer indescribable misery time without end.

There was one part of his sermon which struck me in a very particular manner : he said, " That there were some people who gained something in

return for their souls; if they did not get the whole world, they got a part of it—lands, wealth, honour, or renown; mere trifles, he allowed, in comparison with the value of a man's soul, which is destined either to enjoy delight, or suffer tribulation time without end; but which, in the eyes of the worldly, had a certain value, and which afforded a certain pleasure and satisfaction. But there were also others who lost their souls, and got nothing for them—neither lands, wealth, renown, nor consideration, who were poor outcasts, and despised by everybody. My friends," he added, "if the man is a fool who barters his soul for the whole world, what a fool he must be who barters his soul for nothing."

The eyes of the clergyman, as he uttered these words, wandered around the whole congregation; and when he had concluded them, the eyes of the whole congregation were turned upon my companions and myself.

CHAPTER IX.

RETURN FROM CHURCH.—THE CUCKOO AND GYPSY.—SPIRITUAL DISCOURSE.

THE service over, my companions and myself returned towards the encampment, by the way we came. Some of the humble part of the congregation laughed and joked at us as we passed. Mr. Petulengro and his wife, however, returned their laughs and jokes with interest. As for Tawno and myself, we said nothing: Tawno, like most handsome fellows, having very little to say for himself at any time; and myself, though not handsome, not being particularly skilful at repartee. Some boys followed us for a considerable time, making all kinds of observations about gypsies; but as we walked at a great pace, we gradually left them behind, and at last lost sight of them. Mrs. Petulengro and Tawno Chikno walked together, even as they had come; whilst Mr. Petulengro and myself followed at a little distance.

"That was a very fine preacher we heard," said I to Mr. Petulengro, after we had crossed the stile into the fields.

"Very fine, indeed, brother," said Mr. Petulengro; "he is talked of, far and wide, for his sermons; folks say that there is scarcely another like him in the whole of England."

"He looks rather melancholy, Jasper."

"He lost his wife several years ago, who, they say, was one of the most beautiful women ever seen. They say that it was grief for her loss that made him come out mighty strong as a preacher; for, though he was a clergyman, he was never heard of in the pulpit before he lost his wife; since then, the whole country has rung with the preaching of the clergyman of M . . . . as they call him. Those two nice young gentlewomen, whom you saw with the female childer, are his daughters."

"You seem to know all about him, Jasper. Did you ever hear him preach before?"

"Never, brother; but he has frequently been to our tent, and his daughters too, and given us tracts; for he is one of the people they call Evangelicals, who give folks tracts which they cannot read."

"You should learn to read, Jasper."

"We have no time, brother."

"Are you not frequently idle?"

"Never, brother; when we are not engaged in our traffic, we are engaged in taking our relaxation: so we have no time to learn."

"You really should make an effort. If you were disposed to learn to read, I would endeavour to assist you. You would be all the better for knowing how to read."

"In what way, brother?"

"Why, you could read the Scriptures, and, by so doing, learn your duty towards your fellow-creatures."

"We know that already, brother; the constables and justices have contrived to knock that tolerably into our heads."

"Yet you frequently break the laws."

"So, I believe, do now and then those who know how to read, brother."

"Very true, Jasper; but you really ought to learn to read, as, by so doing, you might learn your duty towards yourselves: and your chief duty is to take care of your own souls; did not the preacher say, 'In what is a man profited, provided he gain the whole world?'"

"We have not much of the world, brother."

"Very little indeed, Jasper. Did you not

observe how the eyes of the whole congregation were turned towards our pew, when the preacher said, 'There are some people who lose their souls, and get nothing in exchange; who are outcast, despised, and miserable?' Now, was not what he said quite applicable to the gypsies?"

"We are not miserable, brother."

"Well, then, you ought to be, Jasper. Have you an inch of ground of your own? Are you of the least use? Are you not spoken ill of by everybody? What 's a gypsy?"

"What 's the bird noising yonder, brother?"

"The bird! Oh, that 's the cuckoo tolling; but what has the cuckoo to do with the matter?"

"We 'll see, brother; what 's the cuckoo?"

"What is it? you know as much about it as myself, Jasper."

"Isn't it a kind of roguish, chaffing bird, brother?"

"I believe it is, Jasper."

"Nobody knows whence it comes, brother?"

"I believe not, Jasper."

"Very poor, brother, not a nest of its own?"

"So they say, Jasper."

"With every person's bad word, brother?"

"Yes, Jasper, every person is mocking it."

"Tolerably merry, brother?"

"Yes, tolerably merry, Jasper."

"Of no use at all, brother?"

"None whatever, Jasper."

"You would be glad to get rid of the cuckoos, brother?"

"Why, not exactly Jasper; the cuckoo is a pleasant, funny bird, and its presence and voice give a great charm to the green trees and fields; no I can't say I wish exactly to get rid of the cuckoo."

"Well, brother, what 's a Romany chal?"

"You must answer that question yourself, Jasper."

"A roguish, chaffing fellow, a'n't he, brother?"

"Ay, ay, Jasper."

"Of no use at all, brother?"

"Just so, Jasper; I see . . . ."

"Something very much like a cuckoo, brother?"

"I see what you are after, Jasper."

"You would like to get rid of us, wouldn't you?"

"Why, no, not exactly."

"We are no ornament to the green lanes in spring and summer time, are we, brother? and

the voices of our chies, with their cukkerin and dukkerin, don't help to make them pleasant?"

"I see what you are at, Jasper."

"You would wish to turn the cuckoos into barn-door fowls, wouldn't you?"

"Can't say I should, Jasper, whatever some people might wish."

"And the chals and chies into radical weavers and factory wenches, hey, brother?"

"Can't say that I should, Jasper. You are certainly a picturesque people, and in many respects an ornament both to town and country; painting and lil writing too are under great obligations to you. What pretty pictures are made out of your campings and groupings, and what pretty books have been written in which gypsies, or at least creatures intended to represent gypsies, have been the principal figures. I think if we were without you, we should begin to miss you."

"Just as you would the cuckoos, if they were all converted into barn-door fowls. I tell you what, brother, frequently as I have sat under a hedge in spring or summer time, and heard the cuckoo, I have thought that we chals and cuckoos are alike in many respects, but espe-

cially in character. Everybody speaks ill of us both, and everybody is glad to see both of us again."

"Yes, Jasper, but there is some difference between men and cuckoos; men have souls, Jasper!"

"And why not cuckoos, brother?"

"You should not talk so, Jasper; what you say is little short of blasphemy. How should a bird have a soul?"

"And how should a man?"

"Oh, we know very well that a man has a soul."

"How do you know it?"

"We know very well."

"Would you take your oath of it, brother—your bodily oath?"

"Why, I think I might, Jasper!"

"Did you ever see the soul, brother?"

"No, I never saw it."

"Then how could you swear to it? A pretty figure you would make in a court of justice, to swear to a thing which you never saw. Hold up your head, fellow. When and where did you see it? Now upon your oath, fellow, do you mean to say that this Roman stole the donkey's foal? Oh, there 's no one for cross-

questioning like Counsellor P . . . . Our people when they are in a hobble always like to employ him, though he is somewhat dear. Now, brother, how can you get over the 'upon your oath, fellow, will you say that you have a soul?'"

"Well, we will take no oaths on the subject; but you yourself believe in the soul. I have heard you say that you believe in dukkerin; now what is dukkerin but the soul science?"

"When did I say that I believed in it?"

"Why, after that fight, when you pointed to the bloody mark in the cloud, whilst he you wot of was galloping in the barouche to the old town, amidst the rain-cataracts, the thunder, and flame of heaven."

"I have some kind of remembrance of it, brother."

"Then, again, I heard you say that the dook of Abershaw rode every night on horseback down the wooded hill."

"I say, brother, what a wonderful memory you have!"

"I wish I had not, Jasper, but I can't help it, it is my misfortune."

"Misfortune! well, perhaps it is; at any rate it is very ungenteel to have such a memory. I have heard my wife say that to show you

have a long memory looks very vulgar; and that you can't give a greater proof of gentility than by forgetting a thing as soon as possible—more especially a promise, or an acquaintance when he happens to be shabby. Well, brother, I don't deny that I may have said that I believe in dukkerin, and in Abershaw's dook, which you say is his soul; but what I believe one moment, or say I believe, don't be certain that I shall believe the next, or say I do."

"Indeed, Jasper, I heard you say on a previous occasion, on quoting a piece of a song, that when a man dies he is cast into the earth, and there 's an end of him."

"I did, did I? Lor' what a memory you have, brother. But you are not sure that I hold that opinion now."

"Certainly not, Jasper. Indeed, after such a sermon as we have been hearing, I should be very shocked if you held such an opinion."

"However, brother, don't be sure I do not, however shocking such an opinion may be to you."

"What an incomprehensible people you are, Jasper."

"We are rather so, brother; indeed, we have posed wiser heads than yours before now."

"You seem to care for so little, and yet you rove about a distinct race."

"I say, brother!"

"Yes, Jasper."

"What do you think of our women?"

"They have certainly very singular names, Jasper."

"Names! Lavengro! However, brother, if you had been as fond of things as of names, you would never have been a pal of ours."

"What do you mean, Jasper?"

"A'n't they rum animals?"

"They have tongues of their own, Jasper."

"Did you ever feel their teeth and nails, brother?"

"Never, Jasper, save Mrs. Herne's. I have always been very civil to them, so . . . ."

"They let you alone. I say, brother, some part of the secret is in them."

"They seem rather flighty, Jasper."

"Ay, ay, brother!"

"Rather fond of loose discourse!"

"Rather so, brother."

"Can you always trust them, Jasper?"

"We never watch them, brother."

"Can they always trust you?"

"Not quite so well as we can them. How-

ever, we get on very well together, except Mikailia and her husband; but Mikailia is a cripple, and is married to the beauty of the world, so she may be expected to be jealous—though he would not part with her for a duchess, no more than I would part with my rawnie, nor any other chal with his."

"Ay, but would not the chi part with the chal for a duke, Jasper?"

"My Pakomovna gave up the duke for me, brother."

"But she occasionally talks of him, Jasper."

"Yes, brother, but Pakomovna was born on a common not far from the sign of the gammon."

"Gammon of bacon, I suppose."

"Yes, brother; but gammon likewise means . . . . ."

"I know it does, Jasper; it means fun, ridicule, jest; it is an ancient Norse word, and is found in the Edda."

"Lor, brother! how learned in lils you are!"

"Many words of Norse are to be found in our vulgar sayings, Jasper; for example—in that particularly vulgar saying of ours, 'Your mother is up,' there's a noble Norse word; mother, there, meaning not the female who bore us, but

rage and choler, as I discovered by reading the Sagas, Jasper."

"Lor, brother! how book-learned you be."

"Indifferently so, Jasper. Then you think you might trust your wife with the duke?"

"I think I could, brother, or even with yourself."

"Myself, Jasper! Oh, I never troubled my head about your wife; but I suppose there have been love affairs between gorgios and Romany chies. Why novels are stuffed with such matters; and then even one of your own songs says so—the song which Ursula was singing the other afternoon."

"That is somewhat of an old song, brother, and is sung by the chies as a warning at our solemn festivals."

"Well! but there 's your sister-in-law, Ursula, herself, Jasper."

"Ursula, herself, brother?"

"You were talking of my having her, Jasper."

"Well, brother, why didn't you have her?"

"Would she have had me?"

"Of course, brother. You are so much of a Roman, and speak Romany so remarkably well."

"Poor thing! she looks very innocent!"

"Remarkably so, brother! however, though

not born on the same common with my wife, she knows a thing or two of Roman matters."

"I should like to ask her a question or two, Jasper, in connection with that song."

"You can do no better, brother. Here we are at the camp. After tea, take Ursula under a hedge, and ask her a question or two in connection with that song."

CHAPTER X.

SUNDAY EVENING.—URSULA.—ACTION AT LAW.—MERIDIANA.—MARRIED ALREADY.

I TOOK tea that evening with Mr. and Mrs. Petulengro and Ursula, outside of their tent. Tawno was not present, being engaged with his wife in his own tabernacle; Sylvester was there, however, lolling listlessly upon the ground. As I looked upon this man, I thought him one of the most disagreeable fellows I had ever seen. His features were ugly, and, moreover, as dark as pepper; and, besides being dark, his skin was dirty. As for his dress, it was torn and sordid. His chest was broad, and his arms seemed powerful; but, upon the whole, he looked a very caitiff. "I am sorry that man has lost his wife," thought I; "for I am sure he will never get another." What surprises me is, that he ever found a woman disposed to unite her lot with his!

After tea I got up and strolled about the

field. My thoughts were upon Isopel Berners. I wondered where she was, and how long she would stay away. At length becoming tired and listless, I determined to return to the dingle, and resume the reading of the Bible at the place where I had left off. "What better could I do," methought, "on a Sunday evening?" I was then near the wood which surrounded the dingle, but at that side which was farthest from the encampment, which stood near the entrance. Suddenly, on turning round the southern corner of the copse, which surrounded the dingle, I perceived Ursula seated under a thorn-bush. I thought I never saw her look prettier than then, dressed as she was, in her Sunday's best.

"Good evening, Ursula," said I; "I little thought to have the pleasure of seeing you here."

"Nor would you, brother," said Ursula, "had not Jasper told me that you had been talking about me, and wanted to speak to me under a hedge; so, hearing that, I watched your motions, and came here and sat down."

"I was thinking of going to my quarters in the dingle, to read the Bible, Ursula, but . . . ."

"Oh, pray then, go to your quarters, brother,

and read the Miduveleskoe lil; you can speak to me under a hedge some other time."

"I think I will sit down with you, Ursula; for, after all, reading godly books in dingles at eve, is rather sombre work. Yes, I think I will sit down with you;" and I sat down by her side.

"Well, brother, now you have sat down with me under the hedge, what have you to say to me?"

"Why, I hardly know, Ursula."

"Not know, brother; a pretty fellow you to ask young women to come and sit with you under hedges, and, when they come, not know what to say to them."

"Oh! ah! I remember; do you know, Ursula, that I take a great interest in you?"

"Thank ye, brother; kind of you, at any rate."

"You must be exposed to a great many temptations, Ursula."

"A great many indeed, brother. It is hard to see fine things, such as shawls, gold watches, and chains in the shops, behind the big glasses, and to know that they are not intended for one. Many 's the time I have been tempted to make

a dash at them; but I bethought myself that by so doing I should cut my hands, besides being almost certain of being grabbed and sent across the gull's bath to the foreign country."

"Then you think gold and fine things temptations, Ursula?"

"Of course, brother, very great temptations; don't you think them so?"

"Can't say I do, Ursula."

"Then more fool you, brother; but have the kindness to tell me what you would call a temptation?"

"Why, for example, the hope of honour and renown, Ursula."

"The hope of honour and renown! very good, brother; but I tell you one thing, that unless you have money in your pocket, and good broadcloth on your back, you are not likely to obtain much honour and—what do you call it? amongst the gorgios, to say nothing of the Romany chals."

"I should have thought, Ursula, that the Romany chals, roaming about the world as they do, free and independent, were above being led by such trifles."

"Then you know nothing of the gypsies, brother; no people on earth are fonder of those

trifles, as you call them, than the Romany chals, and more disposed to respect those who have them."

"Then money and fine clothes would induce you to do anything, Ursula?"

"Ay, ay, brother, anything."

"To chore, Ursula?"

"Like enough, brother; gypsies have been transported before now for choring."

"To hokkawar?"

"Ay, ay; I was telling dukkerin only yesterday, brother."

"In fact, to break the law in everything?"

"Who knows, brother, who knows? as I said before, gold and fine clothes are great temptations."

"Well, Ursula, I am sorry for it, I should never have thought you so depraved."

"Indeed, brother."

"To think that I am seated by one who is willing to—to . . . ."

"Go on, brother."

"To play the thief."

"Go on, brother."

"The liar."

"Go on, brother."

"The—the . . . . ."

"Go on, brother."

"The—the lubbeny."

"The what, brother?" said Ursula, starting from her seat.

"Why, the lubbeny; don't you . . . ."

"I tell you what, brother," said Ursula, looking somewhat pale, and speaking very low, "if I had only something in my hand, I would do you a mischief."

"Why, what is the matter, Ursula?" said I; "how have I offended you?"

"How have you offended me? Why, didn't you insinivate just now that I was ready to play the—the . . . ."

"Go on, Ursula."

"The—the . . . . I'll not say it; but I only wish I had something in my hand."

"If I have offended, Ursula, I am very sorry for it; any offence I may have given you was from want of understanding you. Come, pray be seated, I have much to question you about—to talk to you about."

"Seated, not I! It was only just now that you gave me to understand that you was ashamed to be seated by me, a thief, a liar."

"Well, did you not almost give me to understand that you were both, Ursula?"

"I don't much care being called a thief and a liar," said Ursula, "a person may be a liar and a thief, and yet a very honest woman, but . . . ."

"Well, Ursula."

"I tell you what, brother, if you ever sinivate again that I could be the third thing, so help me duvel! I 'll do you a mischief. By my God I will!"

"Well, Ursula, I assure you that I shall sinivate, as you call it, nothing of the kind about you. I have no doubt, from what you have said, that you are a very paragon of virtue—a perfect Lucretia; but . . . ."

"My name is Ursula, brother, and not Lucretia: Lucretia is not of our family, but one of the Bucklands; she travels about Oxfordshire; yet I am as good as she any day."

"Lucretia! how odd! Where could she have got that name? Well, I make no doubt, Ursula, that you are quite as good as she, and she as her namesake of ancient Rome; but there is a mystery in this same virtue, Ursula, which I cannot fathom; how a thief and a liar should be able, or indeed willing, to preserve her virtue is what I don't understand. You confess that you are very fond of gold. Now, how is it that you

don't barter your virtue for gold sometimes? I am a philosopher, Ursula, and like to know everything. You must be every now and then exposed to great temptation, Ursula; for you are of a beauty calculated to captivate all hearts. Come, sit down and tell me how you are enabled to resist such a temptation as gold and fine clothes?"

"Well, brother," said Ursula, "as you say you mean no harm, I will sit down beside you, and enter into discourse with you; but I will uphold that you are the coolest hand that I ever came nigh, and say the coolest things."

And thereupon Ursula sat down by my side.

"Well, Ursula, we will, if you please, discourse on the subject of your temptations. I suppose that you travel very much about, and show yourself in all kinds of places?"

"In all kinds, brother; I travels, as you say, very much about, attends fairs and races, and enters booths and public-houses, where I tells fortunes, and sometimes dances and sings."

"And do not people often address you in a very free manner?"

"Frequently, brother; and I give them tolerably free answers."

"Do people ever offer to make you presents? I mean presents of value, such as . . . . "

"Silk handkerchiefs, shawls, and trinkets; very frequently, brother."

"And what do you do, Ursula?"

"I take what people offers me, brother, and stows it away as soon as I can."

"Well, but don't people expect something for their presents? I don't mean dukkerin, dancing, and the like; but such a moderate and innocent thing as a choomer, Ursula?"

"Innocent thing, do you call it, brother?"

"The world calls it so, Ursula. Well, do the people who give you the fine things never expect a choomer in return?"

"Very frequently, brother."

"And do you ever grant it?"

"Never, brother."

"How do you avoid it?"

"I gets away as soon as possible, brother. If they follows me, I tries to baffle them, by means of jests and laughter; and if they persist, I uses bad and terrible language, of which I have plenty in store."

"But if your terrible language has no effect?"

"Then I screams for the constable, and if he comes not, I uses my teeth and nails."

"And are they always sufficient?"

"I have only had to use them twice, brother; but then I found them sufficient."

"But suppose the person who followed you was highly agreeable, Ursula? A handsome young officer of local militia, for example, all dressed in Lincoln green, would you still refuse him the choomer?"

"We makes no difference, brother; the daughters of the gypsy-father makes no difference; and, what's more, sees none."

"Well, Ursula, the world will hardly give you credit for such indifference."

"What cares we for the world, brother! we are not of the world."

"But your fathers, brothers, and uncles, give you credit I suppose, Ursula."

"Ay, ay, brother, our fathers, brothers, and cokos gives us all manner of credit; for example, I am telling lies and dukkerin in a public-house where my batu or coko—perhaps both—are playing on the fiddle; well, my batu and my coko beholds me amongst the public-house crew, talking nonsense and hearing nonsense; but they are under no apprehension; and presently

they sees the good-looking officer of militia, in his greens and Lincolns, get up and give me a wink, and I go out with him abroad, into the dark night perhaps; well, my batu and my coko goes on fiddling, just as if I were six miles off asleep in the tent, and not out in the dark street with the local officer, with his Lincolns and his greens."

"They know they can trust you, Ursula?"

"Ay, ay, brother; and, what's more, I knows I can trust myself."

"So you would merely go out to make a fool of him, Ursula?"

"Merely go out to make a fool of him, brother, I assure you."

"But such proceedings really have an odd look, Ursula."

"Amongst gorgios, very so, brother."

"Well, it must be rather unpleasant to lose one's character even amongst gorgios, Ursula; and suppose the officer, out of revenge for being tricked and duped by you, were to say of you the thing that is not, were to meet you on the race-course the next day, and boast of receiving favours which he never had, amidst a knot of jeering militia-men, how would you proceed, Ursula? would you not be abashed?"

"By no means, brother; I should bring my action of law against him."

"Your action at law, Ursula?"

"Yes, brother; I should give a whistle, whereupon all one's cokos and batus, and all my near and distant relations, would leave their fiddling, dukkerin, and horse-dealing, and come flocking about me. 'What's the matter, Ursula?' says my coko. 'Nothing at all I replies, save and except that gorgio, in his greens and his Lincolns, says that I have played the . . . . with him.' 'Oho, he does, Ursula,' says my coko, 'try your action of law against him, my lamb,' and he puts something privily into my hands; whereupon I goes close up to the grinning gorgio, and staring him in the face, with my head pushed forward, I cries out: 'You say I did what was wrong with you last night when I was out with you abroad?' 'Yes, says the local officer, 'I says you did,' looking down all the time. 'You are a liar,' says I, and forthwith I breaks his head with the stick which I holds behind me, and which my coko has conveyed privily into my hand."

"And this is your action at law, Ursula?"

"Yes, brother, this is my action at club-law."

"And would your breaking the fellow's head

quite clear you of all suspicion in the eyes of your batus, cokos, and what not?"

"They would never suspect me at all, brother, because they would know that I would never condescend to be over intimate with a gorgio; the breaking the head would be merely intended to justify Ursula in the eyes of the gorgios."

"And would it clear you in their eyes?"

"Would it not, brother? When they saw the blood running down from the fellow's cracked poll on his greens and Lincolns, they would be quite satisfied; why the fellow would not be able to show his face at fair or merry-making for a year and three quarters."

"Did you ever try it, Ursula?"

"Can't say I ever did, brother, but it would do."

"And how did you ever learn such a method of proceeding?"

"Why 't is advised by gypsy liri, brother. It 's part of our way of settling difficulties amongst ourselves; for example, if a young Roman were to say the thing which is not respecting Ursula and himself, Ursula would call a great meeting of the people, who would all sit down in a ring, the young fellow amongst them;

a coko would then put a stick in Ursula's hand, who would then get up and go to the young fellow, and say, 'Did I play the . . . . with you?' and were he to say 'Yes,' she would crack his head before the eyes of all."

"Well," said I, "Ursula, I was bred an apprentice to gorgio law, and of course ought to stand up for it, whenever I conscientiously can, but I must say the gypsy manner of bringing an action for defamation is much less tedious, and far more satisfactory, than the gorgiko one. I wish you now to clear up a certain point which is rather mysterious to me. You say that for a Romany chi to do what is unseemly with a gorgio is quite out of the question, yet only the other day I heard you singing a song in which a Romany chi confesses herself to be cambri by a grand gorgious gentleman."

"A sad let down," said Ursula.

"Well," said I, "sad or not, there's the song that speaks of the thing, which you give me to understand is not."

"Well, if the thing ever was," said Ursula, "it was a long time ago, and perhaps, after all, not true."

"Then why do you sing the song?"

"I 'll tell you, brother; we sings the song now

and then to be a warning to ourselves to have as little to do as possible in the way of acquaintance with the gorgios; and a warning it is; you see how the young woman in the song was driven out of her tent by her mother, with all kind of disgrace and bad language; but you don't know that she was afterwards buried alive by her cokos and pals, in an uninhabited place; the song doesn't say it, but the story says it, for there is a story about it, though, as I said before, it was a long time ago, and perhaps, after all, wasn't true."

"But if such a thing were to happen at present, would the cokos and pals bury the girl alive?"

"I can't say what they would do,' said Ursula; "I suppose they are not so strict as they were long ago; at any rate, she would be driven from the tan, and avoided by all her family and relations as a gorgio's acquaintance; so that, perhaps, at last, she would be glad if they would bury her alive."

"Well, I can conceive that there would be an objection on the part of the cokos and batus that a Romany chi should form an improper acquaintance with a gorgio, but I should think that the batus and cokos could hardly object to

the chi's entering into the honourable estate of wedlock with a gorgio."

Ursula was silent.

"Marriage is an honourable estate, Ursula."

"Well, brother, suppose it be?"

"I don't see why a Romany chi should object to enter into the honourable estate of wedlock with a gorgio."

"You don't, brother; don't you?"

"No," said I, "and, moreover, I am aware, notwithstanding your evasion, Ursula, that marriages and connections now and then occur between gorgios and Romany chies; the result of which is the mixed breed, called half and half, which is at present travelling about England, and to which the Flaming Tinman belongs, otherwise called Anselo Herne."

"As for the half and halfs," said Ursula, "they are a bad set; and there is not a worse blackguard in England than Anselo Herne."

"All what you say may be very true, Ursula, but you admit that there are half and halfs."

"The more 's the pity, brother."

"Pity, or not, you admit the fact; but how do you account for it?"

"How do I account for it? why, I will tell you, by the break up of a Roman family,

brother—the father of a small family dies, and, perhaps, the mother; and the poor children are left behind; sometimes, they are gathered up by their relations, and sometimes, if they have none, by charitable Romans, who bring them up in the observance of gypsy law; but sometimes they are not so lucky, and falls into the company of gorgios, trampers, and basket-makers, who live in caravans, with whom they take up, and so . . . . I hate to talk of the matter, brother; but so comes this race of the half and halfs."

"Then you mean to say, Ursula, that no Romany chi, unless compelled by hard necessity, would have anything to do with a gorgio."

"We are not over fond of gorgios, brother, and we hates basket-makers, and folks that live in caravans."

"Well," said I, "suppose a gorgio, who is not a basket-maker, a fine handsome gorgious gentleman, who lives in a fine house . . . ."

"We are not fond of houses, brother; I never slept in a house in my life."

"But would not plenty of money induce you?"

"I hate houses, brother, and those who live in them."

"Well, suppose such a person were willing to

resign his fine house; and, for love of you, to adopt gypsy law, speak Romany, and live in a tan, would you have nothing to say to him?"

"Bringing plenty of money with him, brother?"

"Well, bringing plenty of money with him. Ursula."

"Well, brother, suppose you produce your man; where is he?"

"I was merely supposing such a person, Ursula."

"Then you don't know of such a person, brother?"

"Why, no, Ursula; why do you ask?"

"Because, brother, I was almost beginning to think that you meant yourself."

"Myself! Ursula; I have no fine house to resign; nor have I money. Moreover, Ursula, though I have a great regard for you, and though I consider you very handsome, quite as handsome, indeed, as Meridiana in . . . ."

"Meridiana! where did you meet with her?" said Ursula, with a toss of her head.

"Why in old Pulci's . . . ."

"At old Fulcher's! that 's not true, brother. Meridiana is a Borzlam, and travels with her

own people, and not with old Fulcher, who is a gorgio, and a basket-maker."

"I was not speaking of old Fulcher, but Pulci, a great Italian writer, who lived many hundred years ago, and who, in his poem called the 'Morgante Maggiore,' speaks of Meridiana, the daughter of . . . ."

"Old Carus Borzlam," said Ursula; "but if the fellow you mention lived so many hundred years ago, how, in the name of wonder, could he know anything of Meridiana?"

"The wonder, Ursula, is, how your people could ever have got hold of that name, and similar ones. The Meridiana of Pulci was not the daughter of old Carus Borzlam, but of Caradoro, a great pagan king of the East, who, being besieged in his capital by Manfredonio, another mighty pagan king, who wished to obtain possession of his daughter, who had refused him, was relieved in his distress by certain paladins of Charlemagne, with one of whom, Oliver, his daughter Meridiana fell in love."

"I see," said Ursula, "that it must have been altogether a different person, for I am sure that Meridiana Borzlam would never have fallen in love with Oliver. Oliver! why that is the

name of the curo-mengro, who lost the fight near the chong gav, the day of the great tempest, when I got wet through. No, no! Meridiana Borzlam would never have so far forgot her blood as to take up with Tom Oliver."

"I was not talking of that Oliver, Ursula, but of Oliver, peer of France, and paladin of Charlemagne, with whom Meridiana, daughter of Caradoro, fell in love, and for whose sake she renounced her religion and became a Christian, and finally ingravidata, or cambri, by him:—

> 'E nacquene un figliuol, dice la storia,
> Che dette a Carlo-man poi gran vittoria:'

which means . . . ."

"I don't want to know what it means," said Ursula; "no good, I'm sure. Well, if the Meridiana of Charles's wain's pal was no handsomer than Meridiana Borzlam, she was no great catch, brother; for though I am by no means given to vanity, I think myself better to look at than she, though I will say she is no lubbeny, and would scorn . . . ."

"I make no doubt she would, Ursula, and I make no doubt that you are much handsomer than she, or even the Meridiana of Oliver.

What I was about to say, before you interrupted me, is this, that though I have a great regard for you, and highly admire you, it is only in a brotherly way, and . . . ."

"And you had nothing better to say to me," said Ursula, "when you wanted to talk to me beneath a hedge, than that you liked me in a brotherly way! well, I declare . . . ."

"You seem disappointed, Ursula."

"Disappointed, brother! not I."

"You were just now saying that you disliked gorgios, so, of course, could only wish that I, who am a gorgio, should like you in a brotherly way; I wished to have a conversation with you beneath a hedge, but only with the view of procuring from you some information respecting the song which you sung the other day, and the conduct of Roman females, which has always struck me as being highly unaccountable, so, if you thought anything else . . . ."

"What else should I expect from a picker-up of old words, brother? Bah! I dislike a picker-up of old words worse than a picker-up of old rags."

"Don't be angry, Ursula, I feel a great interest in you; you are very handsome, and very clever; indeed, with your beauty and clever-

ness. I only wonder that you have not long since been married."

"You do, do you, brother?"

"Yes. However, keep up your spirits, Ursula. you are not much past the prime of youth, so . . . ."

"Not much past the prime of youth! Don't be uncivil, brother, I was only twenty-two last month."

"Don't be offended, Ursula, but twenty-two is twenty-two, or, I should rather say, that twenty-two in a woman is more than twenty-six in a man. You are still very beautiful, but I advise you to accept the first offer that 's made to you."

"Thank you, brother, but your advice comes rather late; I accepted the first offer that was made me five years ago."

"You married five years ago, Ursula! is it possible?"

"Quite possible, brother, I assure you."

"And how came I to know nothing about it?"

"How comes it that you don't know many thousand things about the Romans, brother? Do you think they tell you all their affairs?"

"Married, Ursula, married! well, I declare!"

"You seem disappointed, brother."

"Disappointed! Oh! no, not at all; but Jasper, only a few weeks ago, told me that you were not married; and, indeed, almost gave me to understand that you would be very glad to get a husband."

"And you believed him? I'll tell you, brother, for your instruction, that there is not in the whole world a greater liar than Jasper Petulengro."

"I am sorry to hear it, Ursula; but with respect to him you married—who might he be? A gorgio, or a Romany chal?"

"Gorgio, or Romany chal? Do you think I would ever condescend to a gorgio? It was a Camomescro, brother, a Lovell, a distant relation of my own."

"And where is he; and what became of him? Have you any family?"

"Don't think I am going to tell you all my history, brother; and, to tell you the truth, I am tired of sitting under hedges with you, talking nonsense. I shall go to my house."

"Do sit a little longer, sister Ursula. I most heartily congratulate you on your marriage. But where is this same Lovell? I have never seen him: I should wish to congratulate him

too. You are quite as handsome as the Meridiana of Pulci, Ursula, ay, or the Despina of Riciardetto. Riciardetto, Ursula, is a poem written by one Fortiguerra, about ninety years ago, in imitation of the Morgante of Pulci. It treats of the wars of Charlemagne and his Paladins with various barbarous nations, who came to besiege Paris. Despina was the daughter and heiress of Scricca, King of Cafria; she was the beloved of Riciardetto, and was beautiful as an angel; but I make no doubt you are quite as handsome as she."

"Brother," said Ursula—but the reply of Ursula I reserve for another chapter, the present having attained to rather an uncommon length, for which, however, the importance of the matte discussed is a sufficient apology.

CHAPTER XI.

URSULA'S TALE.—THE PATTERAN.—THE DEEP WATER.—SECOND HUSBAND.

"BROTHER," said Ursula, plucking a dandelion which grew at her feet, "I have always said that a more civil and pleasant-spoken person than yourself can't be found. I have a great regard for you and your learning, and am willing to do you any pleasure in the way of words or conversation. Mine is not a very happy story, but as you wish to hear it, it is quite at your service. Launcelot Lovell made me an offer, as you call it, and we were married in Roman fashion; that is, we gave each other our right hands, and promised to be true to each other. We lived together two years, travelling sometimes by ourselves, sometimes with our relations; I bore him two children, both of which were still-born, partly, I believe, from the fatigue I underwent in running about the country telling dukkerin when I was not exactly in a state to

do so, and partly from the kicks and blows which my husband Launcelot was in the habit of giving me every night, provided I came home with less than five shillings, which it is sometimes impossible to make in the country, provided no fair or merry-making is going on. At the end of two years my husband, Launcelot, whistled a horse from a farmer's field, and sold it for forty pounds; and for that horse he was taken, put in prison, tried, and condemned to be sent to the other country for life. Two days before he was to be sent away, I got leave to see him in the prison, and in the presence of the turnkey I gave him a thin cake of gingerbread, in which there was a dainty saw which could cut through iron. I then took on wonderfully, turned my eyes inside out, fell down in a seeming fit, and was carried out of the prison. That same night my husband sawed his irons off, cut through the bars of his window, and dropping down a height of fifty feet, lighted on his legs, and came and joined me on a heath where I was camped alone. We were just getting things ready to be off, when we heard people coming, and sure enough they were runners after my husband, Launcelot Lovell; for his escape had been discovered within a quarter of an hour after he had

got away. My husband, without bidding me farewell, set off at full speed, and they after him, but they could not take him, and so they came back and took me, and shook me, and threatened me, and had me before the poknees, who shook his head at me, and threatened me in order to make me discover where my husband was, but I said I did not know, which was true enough; not that I would have told him if I had. So at last the poknees and the runners, not being able to make anything out of me, were obliged to let me go, and I went in search of my husband. I wandered about with my cart for several days in the direction in which I saw him run off, with my eyes bent on the ground, but could see no marks of him; at last, coming to four cross roads, I saw my husband's patteran."

"You saw your husband's patteran?"

"Yes, brother. Do you know what patteran means?"

"Of course, Ursula; the gypsy trail, the handful of grass which the gypsies strew in the roads as they travel, to give information to any of their companions who may be behind, as to the route they have taken. The gypsy patteran has always had a strange interest for me, Ursula"

"Like enough, brother; but what does patteran mean?"

"Why, the gypsy trail, formed as I told you before."

"And you know nothing more about patteran, brother?"

"Nothing at all, Ursula; do you?"

"What's the name for the leaf of a tree, brother?"

"I don't know," said I; "it's odd enough that I have asked that question of a dozen Romany chals and chies, and they always told me that they did not know."

"No more they did, brother; there's only one person in England that knows, and that's myself —the name for a leaf is patteran. Now there are two that knows it—the other is yourself."

"Dear me, Ursula, how very strange! I am much obliged to you. I think I never saw you look so pretty as you do now; but who told you?"

"My mother, Mrs. Herne, told it me one day, brother, when she was in a good humour, which she very seldom was, as no one has a better right to know than yourself, as she hated you mortally: it was one day when you had been asking our company what was the word for a

leaf, and nobody could tell you, that she took me aside and told me, for she was in a good humour, and triumphed in seeing you balked. She told me the word for leaf was patteran, which our people use now for trail, having forgotten the true meaning. She said that the trail was called patteran, because the gypsies of old were in the habit of making the marks with the leaves and branches of trees, placed in a certain manner. She said that nobody knew it but herself, who was one of the old sort, and begged me never to tell the word to any one but him I should marry; and to be particularly cautious never to let you know it, whom she hated. Well, brother, perhaps I have done wrong to tell you; but, as I said before, I likes you, and am always ready to do your pleasure in words and conversation; my mother, moreover, is dead and gone, and, poor thing, will never know anything about the matter. So, when I married, I told my husband about the patteran, and we were in the habit of making our private trail with leaves and branches of trees, which none of the other gypsy people did; so, when I saw my husband's patteran, I knew it at once, and I followed it upwards of two hundred miles towards the north; and then I came to a deep, awful-looking

water, with an overhanging bank, and on the bank I found the patteran, which directed me to proceed along the bank towards the east, and I followed my husband's patteran towards the east; and before I had gone half a mile, I came to a place where I saw the bank had given way, and fallen into the deep water. Without paying much heed, I passed on, and presently came to a public-house, not far from the water, and I entered the public-house to get a little beer, and perhaps to tell a dukkerin, for I saw a great many people about the door; and, when I entered, I found there was what they calls an inquest being held upon a body in that house, and the jury had just risen to go and look at the body; and being a woman, and having a curiosity, I thought I would go with them, and so I did; and no sooner did I see the body, than I knew it to be my husband's; it was much swelled and altered, but I knew it partly by the clothes, and partly by a mark on the forehead, and I cried out, 'It is my husband's body,' and I fell down in a fit, and the fit that time, brother, was not a seeming one."

"Dear me," said I, "how terrible! but tell me, Ursula, how did your husband come by his death?"

"The bank, overhanging the deep water, gave way under him, brother, and he was drowned; for, like most of our people, he could not swim, or only a little. The body, after it had been in the water a long time, came up of itself, and was found floating. Well, brother, when the people of the neighbourhood found that I was the wife of the drowned man, they were very kind to me, and made a subscription for me, with which, after having seen my husband buried, I returned the way I had come, till I met Jasper and his people, and with them I have travelled ever since: I was very melancholy for a long time, I assure you, brother; for the death of my husband preyed very much upon my mind."

"His death was certainly a very shocking one, Ursula; but, really, if he had died a natural one, you could scarcely have regretted it, for he appears to have treated you barbarously."

"Women must bear, brother; and, barring that he kicked and beat me, and drove me out to tell dukkerin when I could scarcely stand, he was not a bad husband. A man, by gypsy law, brother, is allowed to kick and beat his wife, and to bury her alive, if he thinks proper. I am a gypsy, and have nothing to say against the law."

"But what has Mikailia Chikno to say about it?"

"She is a cripple, brother, the only cripple amongst the Roman people: so she is allowed to do and say as she pleases. Moreover, her husband does not think fit to kick or beat her, though it is my opinion she would like him all the better if he were occasionally to do so, and threaten to bury her alive; at any rate, she would treat him better, and respect him more."

"Your sister does not seem to stand much in awe of Jasper Petulengro, Ursula."

"Let the matters of my sister and Jasper Petulengro alone, brother; you must travel in their company some time before you can understand them; they are a strange two, up to all kind of chaffing: but two more regular Romans don't breathe, and I 'll tell you, for your instruction, that there isn't a better mare-breaker in England than Jasper Petulengro, if you can manage Miss Isopel Berners as well as . . . ."

"Isopel Berners," said I, "how came you to think of her?"

"How should I but think of her, brother, living as she does with you in Mumper's dingle, and travelling about with you; you will have, brother, more difficulty to manage her, than

Jasper has to manage my sister Pakomovna. I should have mentioned her before, only I wanted to know what you had to say to me; and when we got into discourse, I forgot her. I say, brother, let me tell you your dukkerin, with respect to her, you will never . . . ."

"I want to hear no dukkerin, Ursula."

"Do let me tell you your dukkerin, brother, you will never manage . . . ."

"I want to hear no dukkerin, Ursula, in connection with Isopel Berners. Moreover, it is Sunday, we will change the subject; it is surprising to me that, after all you have undergone, you should still look so beautiful. I suppose you do not think of marrying again, Ursula?"

"No, brother, one husband at a time is quite enough for any reasonable mort; especially such a good husband as I have got."

"Such a good husband! why, I thought you told me your husband was drowned?"

"Yes, brother, my first husband was."

"And have you a second?"

"To be sure, brother."

"And who is he? in the name of wonder."

"Who is he? why Sylvester, to be sure."

"I do assure you, Ursula, that I feel disposed to be angry with you; such a handsome young

woman as yourself to take up with such a nasty pepper-faced good for nothing . . . ."

"I won't hear my husband abused, brother; so you had better say no more."

"Why, is he not the Lazarus of the gypsies? has he a penny of his own, Ursula?"

"Then the more his want, brother, of a clever chi like me to take care of him and his childer. I tell you what, brother, I will chore, if necessary, and tell dukkerin for Sylvester, if even so heavy as scarcely to be able to stand. You call him lazy; you would not think him lazy if you were in a ring with him; he is a proper man with his hands; Jasper is going to back him for twenty pounds against Slammocks of the Chong gav, the brother of Roarer and Bell-metal, he says he has no doubt that he will win."

"Well, if you like him, I, of course, can have no objection. Have you been long married?"

"About a fortnight, brother; that dinner, the other day, when I sang the song, was given in celebration of the wedding."

"Were you married in a church, Ursula?"

"We were not, brother; none but gorgios, cripples, and lubbenys, are ever married in a church: we took each other's words. Brother, I

have been with you near three hours beneath this hedge. I will go to my husband."

"Does he know that you are here?"

"He does, brother."

"And is he satisfied?"

"Satisfied! of course. Lor', you gorgies! Brother, I go to my husband and my house." And, thereupon, Ursula rose and departed.

After waiting a little time I also arose; it was now dark, and I thought I could do no better than betake myself to the dingle; at the entrance of it I found Mr. Petulengro. "Well, brother," said he, "what kind of conversation have you and Ursula had beneath the hedge?"

"If you wished to hear what we were talking about, you should have come and sat down beside us; you knew where we were."

"Well, brother, I did much the same, for I went and sat down behind you."

"Behind the hedge, Jasper?"

"Behind the hedge, brother."

"And heard all our conversation?"

"Every word, brother; and a rum conversation it was."

"'Tis an old saying, Jasper, that listeners

never hear any good of themselves; perhaps you heard the epithet that Ursula bestowed upon you."

"If, by epitaph, you mean that she called me a liar, I did, brother, and she was not much wrong, for I certainly do not always stick exactly to truth; you, however, have not much to complain of me."

"You deceived me about Ursula, giving me to understand she was not married."

"She was not married when I told you so, brother; that is, not to Sylvester; nor was I aware that she was going to marry him. I once thought you had a kind of regard for her, and I am sure she had as much for you as a Romany chi can have for a gorgio. I half expected to have heard you make love to her behind the hedge, but I begin to think you care for nothing in this world but old words and strange stories. Lor' to take a young woman under a hedge, and talk to her as you did to Ursula; and yet you got everything out of her that you wanted, with your gammon about old Fulcher and Meridiana. You are a cunning one, brother."

"There you are mistaken, Jasper. I am not cunning. If people think I am, it is because,

being made up of art themselves, simplicity of character is a puzzle to them. Your women are certainly extraordinary creatures, Jasper."

"Didn't I say they were rum animals? Brother, we Romans shall always stick together as long as they stick fast to us."

"Do you think they always will, Jasper?"

"Can't say, brother; nothing lasts for ever. Romany chies are Romany chies still, though not exactly what they were sixty years ago. My wife, though a rum one, is not Mrs. Herne, brother. I think she is rather fond of Frenchmen and French discourse. I tell you what, brother, if ever gypsyism breaks up, it will be owing to our chies having been bitten by that mad puppy they calls gentility."

CHAPTER XII.

THE DINGLE AT NIGHT.—THE TWO SIDES OF THE QUESTION.—ROMAN FEMALES.—FILLING THE KETTLE.—THE DREAM.—THE TALL FIGURE.

I DESCENDED to the bottom of the dingle. It was nearly involved in obscurity. To dissipate the feeling of melancholy which came over my mind, I resolved to kindle a fire; and having heaped dry sticks upon my hearth, and added a billet or two, I struck a light, and soon produced a blaze. Sitting down, I fixed my eyes upon the blaze, and soon fell into a deep meditation. I thought of the events of the day, the scene at church, and what I had heard at church, the danger of losing one's soul, the doubts of Jasper Petulengro as to whether one had a soul. I thought over the various arguments which I had either heard, or which had come spontaneously to my mind, for or against the probability of a state of future existence. They appeared to me to be tolerably evenly ba-

lanced. I then thought that it was at all events taking the safest part to conclude that there was a soul. It would be a terrible thing, after having passed one's life in the disbelief of the existence of a soul, to wake up after death a soul, and to find one's self a lost soul. Yes, methought I would come to the conclusion that one has a soul. Choosing the safe side, however, appeared to me playing rather a dastardly part. I had never been an admirer of people who chose the safe side in everything; indeed I had always entertained a thorough contempt for them. Surely it would be showing more manhood to adopt the dangerous side, that of disbelief; I almost resolved to do so—but yet in a question of so much importance, I ought not to be guided by vanity. The question was not which was the safe, but the true side? yet how was I to know which was the true side? Then I thought of the Bible—which I had been reading in the morning —that spoke of the soul and a future state; but was the Bible true? I had heard learned and moral men say that it was true, but I had also heard learned and moral men say that it was not: how was I to decide? Still that balance of probabilities! If I could but see the way of

truth, I would follow it, if necessary, upon hands and knees; on that I was determined; but I could not see it. Feeling my brain begin to turn round, I resolved to think of something else; and forthwith began to think of what had passed between Ursula and myself in our discourse beneath the hedge.

I mused deeply on what she had told me as to the virtue of the females of her race. How singular that virtue must be which was kept pure and immaculate by the possessor, whilst indulging in habits of falsehood and dishonesty. I had always thought the gypsy females extraordinary beings. I had often wondered at them, their dress, their manner of speaking, and, not least, at their names; but, until the present day, I had been unacquainted with the most extraordinary point connected with them. How came they possessed of this extraordinary virtue? was it because they were thievish? I remembered that an ancient thief-taker, who had retired from his useful calling, and who frequently visited the office of my master at law, the respectable S . . . ., who had the management of his property—I remembered to have heard this worthy, with whom I occasionally held discourse, philosophic and profound, when he and I chanced to be

alone together in the office, say that all first-rate thieves were sober, and of well-regulated morals, their bodily passions being kept in abeyance by their love of gain; but this axiom could scarcely hold good with respect to these women —however thievish they might be, they did care for something besides gain: they cared for their husbands. If they did thieve, they merely thieved for their husbands; and though, perhaps, some of them were vain, they merely prized their beauty because it gave them favour in the eyes of their husbands. Whatever the husbands were —and Jasper had almost insinuated that the males occasionally allowed themselves some latitude—they appeared to be as faithful to their husbands as the ancient Roman matrons were to theirs. Roman matrons! and, after all, might not these be in reality Roman matrons? They called themselves Romans; might not they be the descendants of the old Roman matrons? Might not they be of the same blood as Lucretia? And were not many of their strange names—Lucretia amongst the rest—handed down to them from old Rome? It is true their language was not that of old Rome; it was not, however, altogether different from it. After all, the ancient Romans might be a tribe of these people,

who settled down and founded a village with the tilts of carts, which by degrees, and the influx of other people, became the grand city of the world. I liked the idea of the grand city of the world owing its origin to a people who had been in the habit of carrrying their houses in their carts Why, after all, should not the Romans of history be a branch of these Romans? There were several points of similarity between them; if Roman matrons were chaste, both men and women were thieves. Old Rome was the thief of the world; yet still there were difficulties to be removed before I could persuade myself that the old Romans and my Romans were identical; and in trying to remove these difficulties, I felt my brain once more beginning to turn, and in haste took up another subject of meditation, and that was the patteran, and what Ursula had told me about it.

I had always entertained a strange interest for that sign by which in their wanderings the Romanese gave to those of their people who came behind intimation as to the direction which they took; but it now inspired me with greater interest than ever,—now that I had learnt that the proper meaning of it was the leaves of trees. I had, as I had said in my dialogue with Ursula, been

very eager to learn the word for leaf in the Romanian language, but had never learnt it till this day; so patteran signified leaf, the leaf of a tree; and no one at present knew that but myself and Ursula, who had learnt it from Mrs. Herne, the last, it was said, of the old stock; and then I thought what strange people the gypsies must have been in the old time. They were sufficiently strange at present, but they must have been far stranger of old; they must have been a more peculiar people—their language must have been more perfect—and they must have had a greater stock of strange secrets. I almost wished that I had lived some two or three hundred years ago, that I might have observed these people when they were yet stranger than at present. I wondered whether I could have introduced myself to their company at that period, whether I should have been so fortunate as to meet such a strange, half-malicious, half good-humoured being as Jasper, who would have instructed me in the language, then more deserving of note than at present. What might I not have done with that language, had I known it in its purity? Why, I might have written books in it; yet those who spoke it would hardly have admitted me to their society at that period, when

they kept more to themselves. Yet I thought that I might possibly have gained their confidence, and have wandered about with them, and learnt their language, and all their strange ways, and then—and then—and a sigh rose from the depth of my breast; for I began to think, "Supposing I had accomplished all this, what would have been the profit of it? and in what would all this wild gypsy dream have terminated?"

Then rose another sigh, yet more profound, for I began to think, "What was likely to be the profit of my present way of life; the living in dingles, making pony and donkey shoes, conversing with gypsy-women under hedges, and extracting from them their odd secrets?" What was likely to be the profit of such a kind of life, even should it continue for a length of time?—a supposition not very probable, for I was earning nothing to support me, and the funds with which I had entered upon this life were gradually disappearing. I was living, it is true, not unpleasantly, enjoying the healthy air of heaven; but, upon the whole, was I not sadly misspending my time? Surely I was; and, as I looked back, it appeared to me that I had always been doing so. What had been the profit of the tongues which I

had learnt? had they ever assisted me in the day of hunger? No, no! it appeared to me that I had always misspent my time, save in one instance, when by a desperate effort I had collected all the powers of my imagination, and written the "Life of Joseph Sell;" but even when I wrote the Life of Sell, was I not in a false position? Provided I had not misspent my time, would it have been necessary to make that effort, which, after all, had only enabled me to leave London, and wander about the country for a time? But could I, taking all circumstances into consideration, have done better than I had? With my peculiar temperament and ideas, could I have pursued with advantage the profession to which my respectable parents had endeavoured to bring me up? It appeared to me that I could not, and that the hand of necessity had guided me from my earliest years, until the present night in which I found myself seated in the dingle, staring on the brands of the fire. But ceasing to think of the past which, as irrecoverably gone, it was useless to regret, even were there cause to regret it, what should I do in future? Should I write another book like the Life of Joseph Sell; take it to London, and offer it to a publisher? But when I reflected on the

grisly sufferings which I had undergone whilst engaged in writing the Life of Sell, I shrank from the idea of a similar attempt; moreover, I doubted whether I possessed the power to write a similar work—whether the materials for the life of another Sell lurked within the recesses of my brain? Had I not better become in reality what I had hitherto been merely playing at—a tinker or a gypsy? But I soon saw that I was not fitted to become either in reality. It was much more agreeable to play the gypsy or the tinker, than to become either in reality. I had seen enough of gypsying and tinkering to be convinced of that. All of a sudden the idea of tilling the soil came into my head; tilling the soil was a healthful and noble pursuit! but my idea of tilling the soil had no connection with Britain; for I could only expect to till the soil in Britain as a serf. I thought of tilling it in America, in which it was said there was plenty of wild, unclaimed land, of which any one, who chose to clear it of its trees, might take possession. I figured myself in America, in an immense forest, clearing the land destined, by my exertions, to become a fruitful and smiling plain. Methought I heard the crash of the huge trees as they fell beneath my axe; and then I bethought me that

a man was intended to marry—I ought to marry; and if I married, where was I likely to be more happy as a husband and a father than in America, engaged in tilling the ground? I fancied myself in America, engaged in tilling the ground, assisted by an enormous progeny. Well, why not marry, and go and till the ground in America? I was young, and youth was the time to marry in, and to labour in. I had the use of all my faculties; my eyes, it is true, were rather dull from early study, and from writing the Life of Joseph Sell; but I could see tolerably well with them, and they were not bleared. I felt my arms, and thighs, and teeth—they were strong and sound enough; so now was the time to labour, to marry, eat strong flesh, and beget strong children — the power of doing all this would pass away with youth, which was terribly transitory. I bethought me that a time would come when my eyes would be bleared, and, perhaps, sightless; my arms and thighs strengthless and sapless; when my teeth would shake in my jaws, even supposing they did not drop out. No going a wooing then—no labouring—no eating strong flesh, and begetting lusty children then; and I bethought me how, when all this should be, I should bewail the days of my youth as mis-

spent, provided I had not in them founded for myself a home, and begotten strong children to take care of me in the days when I could not take care of myself; and thinking of these things, I became sadder and sadder, and stared vacantly upon the fire till my eyes closed in a doze.

I continued dozing over the fire, until rousing myself I perceived that the brands were nearly consumed, and I thought of retiring for the night. I arose, and was about to enter my tent, when a thought struck me. "Suppose," thought I, "that Isopel Berners should return in the midst of the night, how dark and dreary would the dingle appear without a fire! truly, I will keep up the fire, and I will do more; I have no board to spread for her, but I will fill the kettle, and heat it, so that, if she comes, I may be able to welcome her with a cup of tea, for I know she loves tea." Thereupon, I piled more wood upon the fire, and soon succeeded in producing a better blaze than before; then, taking the kettle, I set out for the spring. On arriving at the mouth of the dingle, which fronted the east, I perceived that Charles's wain was nearly opposite to it, high above in the heavens, by which I knew that the night was tolerably well advanced. The gypsy encampment lay before me; all was

hushed and still within it, and its inmates appeared to be locked in slumber; as I advanced, however, the dogs, which were fastened outside the tents, growled and barked; but presently recognising me, they were again silent, some of them wagging their tails. As I drew near a particular tent, I heard a female voice say—"Some one is coming!" and, as I was about to pass it, the cloth which formed the door was suddenly lifted up, and a black head, and part of a huge naked body protruded. It was the head and upper part of the giant Tawno, who, according to the fashion of gypsy men, lay next the door, wrapped in his blanket; the blanket had, however, fallen off, and the starlight shone clear on his athletic tawny body, and was reflected from his large staring eyes.

"It is only I, Tawno," said I, "going to fill the kettle, as it is possible that Miss Berners may arrive this night." "Kos-ko," drawled out Tawno, and replaced the curtain. "Good, do you call it?" said the sharp voice of his wife; "there is no good in the matter; if that young chap were not living with the rawnee in the illegal and uncertificated line, he would not be getting up in the middle of the night to fill her kettles." Passing on, I proceeded to the spring,

where I filled the kettle, and then returned to the dingle.

Placing the kettle upon the fire, I watched it till it began to boil; then removing it from the top of the brands, I placed it close beside the fire, and leaving it simmering, I retired to my tent; where, having taken off my shoes, and a few of my garments, I lay down on my palliasse, and was not long in falling asleep. I believe I slept soundly for some time, thinking and dreaming of nothing; suddenly, however, my sleep became disturbed, and the subject of the patterans began to occupy my brain. I imagined that I saw Ursula tracing her husband, Launcelot Lovel, by means of his patterans; I imagined that she had considerable difficulty in doing so; that she was occasionally interrupted by parish beadles and constables, who asked her whither she was travelling, to whom she gave various answers. Presently methought that, as she was passing by a farm-yard, two fierce and savage dogs flew at her; I was in great trouble, I remember, and wished to assist her, but could not, for though I seemed to see her, I was still at a distance: and now it appeared that she had escaped from the dogs, and was proceeding with her cart along a gravelly path which traversed a wild moor;

I could hear the wheels grating amidst sand and gravel. The next moment I was awake, and found myself sitting up in my tent; there was a glimmer of light through the canvas caused by the fire; a feeling of dread came over me, which was perhaps natural, on starting suddenly from one's sleep in that wild lone place; I half imagined that some one was nigh the tent; the idea made me rather uncomfortable, and, to dissipate it, I lifted up the canvas of the door and peeped out, and, lo! I had an indistinct view of a tall figure standing by the tent. "Who is that?" said I, whilst I felt my blood rush to my heart. "It is I," said the voice of Isopel Berners; "you little expected me, I dare say; well, sleep on, I do not wish to disturb you." "But I was expecting you," said I, recovering myself, "as you may see by the fire and the kettle. I will be with you in a moment."

Putting on in haste the articles of dress which I had flung off, I came out of the tent, and addressing myself to Isopel, who was standing beside her cart, I said—"Just as I was about to retire to rest I thought it possible that you might come to-night, and got everything in readiness for you. Now, sit down by the fire whilst I lead the donkey and cart to the place

where you stay; I will unharness the animal, and presently come and join you." "I need not trouble you," said Isopel; "I will go myself and see after my things." "We will go together," said I, "and then return and have some tea." Isopel made no objection, and in about half an hour we had arranged everything at her quarters, I then hastened and prepared tea. Presently Isopel rejoined me, bringing her stool; she had divested herself of her bonnet, and her hair fell over her shoulders; she sat down, and I poured out the beverage, handing her a cup. "Have you made a long journey to-night?" said I. "A very long one," replied Belle, "I have come nearly twenty miles since six o'clock." "I believe I heard you coming in my sleep," said I; "did the dogs above bark at you?" "Yes," said Isopel, "very violently; did you think of me in your sleep?" "No," said I, "I was thinking of Ursula and something she had told me." "When and where was that?" said Isopel. "Yesterday evening," said I, "beneath the dingle hedge." "Then you were talking with her beneath the hedge?" "I was," said I, "but only upon gypsy matters. Do you know, Belle, that she has just been married to

Sylvester, so you need not think that she and I . . . ." "She and you are quite at liberty to sit where you please," said Isopel. "However, young man," she continued, dropping her tone, which she had slightly raised, "I believe what you said, that you were merely talking about gypsy matters, and also what you were going to say, if it was, as I suppose, that she and you had no particular acquaintance." Isopel was now silent for some time. "What are you thinking of?" said I. "I was thinking," said Belle, "how exceedingly kind it was of you to get everything in readiness for me, though you did not know that I should come." "I had a presentiment that you would come," said I; "but you forget that I have prepared the kettle for you before, though it was true I was then certain that you would come." "I had not forgotten your doing so, young man," said Belle; "but I was beginning to think that you were utterly selfish, caring for nothing but the gratification of your own strange whims." "I am very fond of having my own way," said I, "but utterly selfish I am not, as I dare say I shall frequently prove to you. You will often find the kettle boiling when you come home." "Not heated by you," said Isopel, with a sigh. "By whom else?" said

I ; "surely you are not thinking of driving me away?" "You have as much right here as myself," said Isopel, "as I have told you before ; but I must be going myself." "Well," said I, "we can go together ; to tell you the truth, I am rather tired of this place." "Our paths must be separate," said Belle. "Separate," said I, "what do you mean? I shan't let you go alone, I shall go with you ; and you know the road is as free to me as to you ; besides, you can't think of parting company with me, considering how much you would lose by doing so ; remember that you scarcely know anything of the Armenian language ; now, to learn Armenian from me would take you twenty years."

Belle faintly smiled. "Come," said I, "take another cup of tea." Belle took another cup of tea, and yet another ; we had some indifferent conversation, after which I arose and gave her donkey a considerable feed of corn. Belle thanked me, shook me by the hand, and then went to her own tabernacle, and I returned to mine.

CHAPTER XIII.

VISIT TO THE LANDLORD.—HIS MORTIFICATIONS.—HUNTER AND HIS CLAN.—RESOLUTION.

On the following morning, after breakfasting with Belle, who was silent and melancholy, I left her in the dingle, and took a stroll amongst the neighbouring lanes. After some time I thought I would pay a visit to the landlord of the public-house, whom I had not seen since the day when he communicated to me his intention of changing his religion. I therefore directed my steps to the house, and on entering it found the landlord standing in the kitchen. Just then two mean-looking fellows, who had been drinking at one of the tables, and who appeared to be the only customers in the house, got up, brushed past the landlord, and saying in a surly tone we shall pay you some time or other, took their departure. "That 's the way they serve me now," said the landlord, with a sigh. "Do you know those fellows," I demanded, "since you

let them go away in your debt?" "I know nothing about them," said the landlord, "save that they are a couple of scamps." "Then why did you let them go away without paying you?" said I. "I had not the heart to stop them," said the landlord; "and, to tell you the truth, everybody serves me so now, and I suppose they are right, for a child could flog me." "Nonsense," said I, "behave more like a man, and with respect to those two fellows run after them, I will go with you, and if they refuse to pay the reckoning I will help you to shake some money out of their clothes." "Thank you," said the landlord; but as they are gone, let them go on. What they have drank is not of much consequence." "What is the matter with you?" said I, staring at the landlord, who appeared strangely altered; his features were wild and haggard, his formerly bluff cheeks were considerably sunken in, and his figure had lost much of its plumpness. "Have you changed your religion already, and has the fellow in black commanded you to fast?" "I have not changed my religion yet," said the landlord, with a kind of shudder; "I am to change it publicly this day fortnight, and the idea of doing so—I do not mind telling you—preys much upon my

mind; moreover, the noise of the thing has got abroad, and everybody is laughing at me, and what 's more, coming and drinking my beer, and going away without paying for it, whilst I feel myself like one bewitched, wishing but not daring to take my own part. Confound the fellow in black, I wish I had never seen him! yet what can I do without him? The brewer swears that unless I pay him fifty pounds within a fortnight he 'll send a distress warrant into the house, and take all I have. My poor niece is crying in the room above; and I am thinking of going into the stable and hanging myself; and perhaps it 's the best thing I can do, for it 's better to hang myself before selling my soul than afterwards, as I 'm sure I should, like Judas Iscariot, whom my poor niece, who is somewhat religiously inclined, has been talking to me about." "I wish I could assist you," said I, "with money, but that is quite out of my power. However, I can give you a piece of advice. Don't change your religion by any means; you can't hope to prosper if you do; and if the brewer chooses to deal hardly with you, let him. Everybody would respect you ten times more provided you allowed yourself to be turned into the roads rather than change your religion, than

if you got fifty pounds for renouncing it." "I am half inclined to take your advice," said the landlord, "only, to tell you the truth, I feel quite low, without any heart in me." "Come into the bar," said I, "and let us have something together—you need not be afraid of my not paying for what I order."

We went into the bar-room, where the landlord and I discussed between us two bottles of strong ale, which he said were part of the last six which he had in his possession. At first he wished to drink sherry, but I begged him to do no such thing, telling him that sherry would do him no good, under the present circumstances; nor, indeed, to the best of my belief under any, it being of all wines the one for which I entertained the most contempt. The landlord allowed himself to be dissuaded, and, after a glass or two of ale, confessed that sherry was a sickly disagreeable drink, and that he had merely been in the habit of taking it from an idea he had that it was genteel. Whilst quaffing our beverage, he gave me an account of the various mortifications to which he had of late been subject, dwelling with particular bitterness on the conduct of Hunter, who he said came every night and mouthed him, and afterwards went away

without paying for what he had drank or smoked, in which conduct he was closely imitated by a clan of fellows who constantly attended him. After spending several hours at the public-house I departed, not forgetting to pay for the two bottles of ale. The landlord, before I went, shaking me by the hand, declared that he had now made up his mind to stick to his religion at all hazards, the more especially as he was convinced he should derive no good by giving it up.

CHAPTER XIV.

PREPARATIONS FOR THE FAIR.—THE LAST LESSON.—THE VERB SIRIEL.

It might be about five in the evening when I reached the gypsy encampment. Here I found Mr. Petulengro, Tawno Chikno, Sylvester, and others, in a great bustle, clipping and trimming certain ponies and old horses which they had brought with them. On inquiring of Jasper the reason of their being so engaged, he informed me that they were getting the horses ready for a fair, which was to be held on the morrow, at a place some miles distant, at which they should endeavour to dispose of them, adding—"Perhaps, brother, you will go with us, provided you have nothing better to do?" Not having any particular engagement, I assured him that I should have great pleasure in being of the party. It was agreed that we should start early on the following morning. Thereupon I descended into the dingle. Belle was sitting before the fire, at

which the kettle was boiling. "Were you waiting for me?" I inquired. "Yes," said Belle, "I thought that you would come, and I waited for you." "That was very kind," said I. "Not half so kind," said she, "as it was of you to get everything ready for me in the dead of last night, when there was scarcely a chance of my coming." The tea-things were brought forward, and we sat down. "Have you been far?" said Belle. "Merely to that public-house," said I, "to which you directed me on the second day of our acquaintance." "Young men should not make a habit of visiting public-houses," said Belle, "they are bad places." "They may be so to some people," said I, "but I do not think the worst public-house in England could do me any harm." "Perhaps you are so bad already," said Belle, with a smile, "that it would be impossible to spoil you." "How dare you catch at my words?" said I; "come, I will make you pay for doing so—you shall have this evening the longest lesson in Armenian which I have yet inflicted upon you." "You may well say inflicted," said Belle, "but pray spare me. I do not wish to hear anything about Armenian, especially this evening." "Why this evening?" said I. Belle made no answer. "I will not

spare you," said I; "this evening I intend to make you conjugate an Armenian verb." "Well, be it so," said Belle; "for this evening you shall command." "To command is hramahyel," said I. "Ram her ill, indeed," said Belle; "I do not wish to begin with that." "No," said I, "as we have come to the verbs, we will begin regularly; "hramahyel is a verb of the second conjugation. We will begin with the first." "First of all tell me," said Belle, "what a verb is?" "A part of speech," said I, "which, according to the dictionary, signifies some action or passion; for example, I command you, or I hate you." "I have given you no cause to hate me," said Belle, looking me sorrowfully in the face.

"I was merely giving two examples," said I, "and neither was directed at you. In those examples, to command and hate are verbs. Belle, in Armenian there are four conjugations of verbs; the first end in al, the second in yel, the third in oul, and the fourth in il. Now, have you understood me?"

"I am afraid, indeed, it will all end ill," said Belle. "Hold your tongue," said I, "or you will make me lose my patience." "You have already made me nearly lose mine," said Belle. "Let us have no unprofitable interruptions,"

said I; "the conjugations of the Armenian verbs are neither so numerous nor so difficult as the declensions of the nouns; hear that, and rejoice. Come, we will begin with the verb hntal, a verb of the first conjugation, which signifies to rejoice. Come along; hntam, I rejoice; hntas, thou rejoicest: why don't you follow, Belle?"

"I am sure I don't rejoice, whatever you may do," said Belle. "The chief difficulty, Belle," said I, "that I find in teaching you the Armenian grammar, proceeds from your applying to yourself and me every example I give. Rejoice, in this instance, is merely an example of an Armenian verb of the first conjugation, and has no more to do with your rejoicing than lal, which is also a verb of the first conjugation, and which signifies to weep, would have to do with your weeping, provided I made you conjugate it. Come along; hntam, I rejoice; hntas thou rejoicest; hntà, he rejoices; hntamk, we rejoice: now, repeat those words."

"I can't," said Belle, "they sound more like the language of horses than of human beings. Do you take me for . . . . ?" "For what?" said I. Belle was silent. "Were you going to say mare?" said I. "Mare! mare! by-the-by, do you know, Belle, that mare in old English stands

for woman; and that when we call a female an evil mare, the strict meaning of the term is merely bad woman. So if I were to call you mare, without prefixing bad, you must not be offended." "But I should, though," said Belle. "I was merely attempting to make you acquainted with a philological fact," said I. "If mare, which in old English, and likewise in vulgar English, signifies a woman, sounds the same as mare, which in modern and polite English signifies a female horse, I can't help it. There is no such confusion of sounds in Armenian, not, at least, in the same instance. Belle, in Armenian, woman is ghin, the same word, by the bye, a sour queen, whereas mare is madagh tzi, which signifies a female horse; and perhaps you will permit me to add, that a hard-mouthed jade is, in Armenian, madagh tzi hsdierah."

"I can't bear this much longer," said Belle. "Keep yourself quiet," said I; "I wish to be gentle with you; and to convince you, we will skip hntal, and also for the present verbs of the first conjugation, and proceed to the second. Belle, I will now select for you to conjugate the prettiest verb in Armenian; not only of the second, but also of all the four conjugations;

that verb is siriel. Here is the present tense: — siriem, siries, sirè, siriemk, sirèk, sirien. You observe that it runs on just in the same manner as hntal, save and except that e is substituted for a; and it will be as well to tell you that almost the only difference between the second, third, and fourth conjugations, and the first, is the substituting in the present, preterite, and other tenses e, or ou, or i for a; so you see that the Armenian verbs are by no means difficult. Come on, Belle, and say siriem." Belle hesitated. "Pray oblige me, Belle, by saying siriem!" Belle still appeared to hesitate. "You must admit, Belle, that it is much softer than hntam." "It is so," said Belle; "and to oblige you, I will say siriem." "Very well indeed, Belle," said I. "No vartabied, or doctor, could have pronounced it better; and now, to show you how verbs act upon pronouns in Armenian, I will say siriem zkiez. Please to repeat siriem zkiez!" "Siriem zkiez!" said Belle; "that last word is very hard to say." "Sorry that you think so, Belle," said I. "Now please to say siriá zis." Belle did so. "Exceedingly well," said I. "Now say yerani thè sirèir zis." "Yerani

thè sirèir zis," said Belle. "Capital!" said I; "you have now said, I love you—love me —ah! would that you would love me!"

"And I have said all these things?" said Belle. "Yes," said I; "you have said them in Armenian." "I would have said them in no language that I understood," said Belle; "and it was very wrong of you to take advantage of my ignorance, and make me say such things." "Why so?" said I; "if you said them, I said them too." "You did so," said Belle; "but I believe you were merely bantering and jeering." "As I told you before, Belle," said I, "the chief difficulty which I find in teaching you Armenian proceeds from your persisting in applying to yourself and me every example I give." "Then you meant nothing after all?" said Belle, raising her voice. "Let us proceed," said I; "sirietsi, I loved." "You never loved any one but yourself," said Belle; "and what's more . . . . ." "Sirietsits, I will love," said I; "siriestsies, thou wilt love." "Never one so thoroughly heartless," said Belle. "I tell you what, Belle, you are becoming intolerable, but we will change the verb; or rather I will now proceed to tell you here, that some of the Armenian conjugations have their anomalies; one species of these I wish to bring

before your notice. As old Villotte says — from whose work I first contrived to pick up the rudiments of Armenian—'Est verborum transitivorum, quorum infinitivus . . . .' but I forgot, you don't understand Latin. He says there are certain transitive verbs, whose infinitive is in outsaniel; the preterite in outsi; the imperative in oue; for example—parghatsoutsaniem, I irritate" . . . .

"You do, you do," said Belle; "and it will be better for both of us, if you leave off doing so."

"You would hardly believe, Belle," said I, "that the Armenian is in some respects closely connected with the Irish, but so it is; for example, that word parghatsoutsaniem is evidently derived from the same root as feargaim, which, in Irish, is as much as to say I vex."

"You do, indeed," said Belle, sobbing.

"But how do you account for it?"

"O man, man!" said Belle, bursting into tears, "for what purpose do you ask a poor ignorant girl such a question, unless it be to vex and irritate her? If you wish to display your learning, do so to the wise and instructed, and not to me, who can scarcely read or write. Oh, leave off your nonsense; yet I know you will not do so, for it is the breath of your nostrils! I could

have wished we should have parted in kindness, but you will not permit it. I have deserved better at your hands than such treatment. The whole time we have kept company together in this place, I have scarcely had one kind word from you, but the strangest" . . . . and here the voice of Belle was drowned in her sobs.

"I am sorry to see you take on so, dear Belle," said I. "I really have given you no cause to be so unhappy; surely teaching you a little Armenian was a very innocent kind of diversion."

"Yes, but you went on so long, and in such a strange way, and made me repeat such strange examples, as you call them, that I could not bear it."

"Why, to tell you the truth, Belle, it 's my way; and I have dealt with you just as I would with . . . ."

"A hard-mouthed jade," said Belle, "and you practising your horse-witchery upon her. I have been of an unsubdued spirit, I acknowledge, but I was always kind to you; and if you have made me cry, it 's a poor thing to boast of."

"Boast of!" said I; "a pretty thing indeed to boast of; I had no idea of making you cry. Come, I beg your pardon; what more can

I do? Come, cheer up, Belle. You were talking of parting; don't let us part, but depart, and that together."

"Our ways lie different,"·said Belle.

"I don't see why they should," said I. "Come, let us be off to America together?"

"To America together?" said Belle, looking full at me.

"Yes," said I; "where we will settle down in some forest, and conjugate the verb siriel conjugally."

"Conjugally?" said Belle.

"Yes," said I; "as man and wife in America, air yew ghin."

"You are jesting, as usual," said Belle.

"Not I, indeed. Come, Belle, make up your mind, and let us be off to America; and leave priests, humbug, learning, and languages behind us."

"I don't think you are jesting," said Belle; "but I can hardly entertain your offers; however, young man, I thank you."

"You had better make up your mind at once," said I, "and let us be off. I shan't make a bad husband, I assure you. Perhaps you think I am not worthy of you? To convince you, Belle, that I am, I am ready to try a fall with you this mo-

ment upon the grass. Brynhilda, the valkyrie, swore that no one should marry her who could not fling her down. Perhaps you have done the same. The man who eventually married her, got a friend of his, who was called Sygurd, the serpent-killer, to wrestle with her, disguising him in his own armour. Sygurd flung her down, and won her for his friend, though he loved her himself. I shall not use a similar deceit, nor employ Jasper Petulengro to personate me—so get up, Belle, and I will do my best to fling you down."

"I require no such thing of you, or anybody," said Belle; "you are beginning to look rather wild."

"I every now and then do," said I; "come, Belle, what do you say?"

"I will say nothing at present on the subject," said Belle, "I must have time to consider."

"Just as you please," said I, "to-morrow I go to a fair with Mr. Petulengro, perhaps you will consider whilst I am away. Come, Belle, let us have some more tea. I wonder whether we shall be able to procure tea as good as this in the American forest."

CHAPTER XV.

THE DAWN OF DAY.—THE LAST FAREWELL.—DEPARTURE FOR THE FAIR.— THE FINE HORSE.—RETURN TO THE DINGLE.—NO ISOPEL.

It was about the dawn of day when I was awakened by the voice of Mr. Petulengro shouting from the top of the dingle, and bidding me get up. I arose instantly, and dressed myself for the expedition to the fair. On leaving my tent, I was surprised to observe Belle, entirely dressed, standing close to her own little encampment. "Dear me," said I, "I little expected to find you up so early. I suppose Jasper's call awakened you, as it did me." "I merely lay down in my things," said Belle, "and have not slept during the night." "And why did you not take off your things and go to sleep?" said I. "I did not undress," said Belle, "because I wished to be in readiness to bid you farewell when you departed; and as for sleeping, I could not." "Well, God bless you!" said I, taking

Belle by the hand. Belle made no answer, and I observed that her hand was very cold. "What is the matter with you?" said I, looking her in the face. Belle looked at me for a moment in the eyes, and then cast down her own—her features were very pale. "You are really unwell," said I, "I had better not go to the fair, but stay here, and take care of you." "No," said Belle, "pray go, I am not unwell." "Then go to your tent," said I, "and do not endanger your health by standing abroad in the raw morning air. God bless you, Belle, I shall be home to-night, by which time I expect you will have made up your mind, if not, another lesson in Armenian, however late the hour be." I then wrung Belle's hand, and ascended to the plain above.

I found the Romany party waiting for me, and everything in readiness for departing. Mr. Petulengro and Tawno Chikno were mounted on two old horses. The rest, who intended to go to the fair, amongst whom were two or three women, were on foot. On arriving at the extremity of the plain, I looked towards the dingle. Isopel Berners stood at the mouth, the beams of the early morning sun shone full on her noble face and figure. I waved my hand towards her.

She slowly lifted up her right arm. I turned away, and never saw Isopel Berners again.

My companions and myself proceeded on our way. In about two hours we reached the place where the fair was to be held. After breakfasting on bread and cheese and ale behind a broken stone wall, we drove our animals to the fair. The fair was a common cattle and horse fair: there was little merriment going on, but there was no lack of business. By about two o'clock in the afternoon, Mr. Petulengro and his people had disposed of their animals at what they conceived very fair prices—they were all in high spirits, and Jasper proposed to adjourn to a public-house. As we were proceeding to one, a very fine horse, led by a jockey, made its appearance on the ground. Mr. Petulengro stopped short, and looked at it steadfastly: "Fino covar dove odoy sas miro—a fine thing were that, if it were but mine!" he exclaimed. "If you covet it," said I, "why do you not purchase it?" "We low gyptians never buy animals of that description; if we did we could never sell them, and most likely should be had up as horse-stealers." "Then why did you say just now, 'It were a fine thing if it were but yours?'" said I. "We gyptians always say so when

we see anything that we admire. An animal like that is not intended for a little hare like me, but for some grand gentleman like yourself. I say, brother, do you buy that horse!" "How should I buy the horse, you foolish person!" said I. "Buy the horse, brother," said Mr. Petulengro, "if you have not the money I can lend it you; though I be of lower Egypt." "You talk nonsense," said I; "however, I wish you would ask the man the price of it." Mr. Petulengro, going up to the jockey, inquired the price of the horse—the man, looking at him scornfully, made no reply. "Young man," said I, going up to the jockey, "do me the favour to tell me the price of that horse, as I suppose it is to sell." The jockey, who was a surly-looking man, of about fifty, looked at me for a moment, then, after some hesitation, said, laconically, "Seventy." "Thank you," said I, and turned away. "Buy that horse," said Mr. Petulengro, coming after me; "the dook tells me that in less than three months he will be sold for twice seventy." "I will have nothing to do with him," said I; "besides, Jasper, I don't like his tail. Did you observe what a mean scrubby tail he has?" "What a fool you are, brother," said Mr. Petulengro; "that very tail of his shows his breeding. No

good bred horse ever yet carried a fine tail—'tis your scrubby-tailed horses that are your out-and-outers. Did you ever hear of Syntax, brother? That tail of his puts me in mind of Syntax. Well, I say nothing more, have your own way—all I wonder at is, that a horse like him was ever brought to such a fair of dog cattle as this."

We then made the best of our way to a public-house, where we had some refreshment. I then proposed returning to the encampment, but Mr. Petulengro declined, and remained drinking with his companions till about six o'clock in the evening, when various jockeys from the fair came in. After some conversation a jockey proposed a game of cards; and in a little time, Mr. Petulengro and another gypsy sat down to play a game of cards with two of the jockeys.

Though not much acquainted with cards, I soon conceived a suspicion that the jockeys were cheating Mr. Petulengro and his companion, I therefore called Mr. Petulengro aside, and gave him a hint to that effect. Mr. Petulengro, however, instead of thanking me, told me to mind my own bread and butter, and forthwith returned to his game. I continued watching the players for some hours. The gypsies lost consi-

derably, and I saw clearly that the jockeys were cheating them most confoundedly. I therefore once more called Mr. Petulengro aside, and told him that the jockeys were cheating him, conjuring him to return to the encampment. Mr. Petulengro, who was by this time somewhat the worse for liquor, now fell into a passion, swore several oaths, and asking me who had made me a Moses over him and his brethren, told me to return to the encampment by myself. Incensed at the unworthy return which my well-meant words had received, I forthwith left the house, and having purchased a few articles of provision, I set out for the dingle alone. It was dark night when I reached it, and descending I saw the glimmer of a fire from the depths of the dingle; my heart beat with fond anticipation of a welcome. "Isopel Berners is waiting for me," said I, "and the first word that I shall hear from her lips is that she has made up her mind. We shall go to America, and be so happy together. On reaching the bottom of the dingle, however, I saw seated near the fire, beside which stood the kettle simmering, not Isopel Berners, but a gypsy girl, who told me that Miss Berners when she went away had charged her to keep up the fire, and have the kettle boiling against

my arrival. Startled at these words, I inquired at what hour Isopel had left, and whither she was gone, and was told that she had left the dingle, with her cart, about two hours after I departed; but where she was gone she the girl did not know. I then asked whether she had left no message, and the girl replied that she had left none, but had merely given directions about the kettle and fire, putting, at the same time, sixpence into her hand. "Very strange, thought I;" then dismissing the gipsy girl I sat down by the fire. I had no wish for tea, but sat looking on the embers, wondering what could be the motive of the sudden departure of Isopel. "Does she mean to return?" thought I to myself. "Surely she means to return," Hope replied, "or she would not have gone away without leaving any message"—"and yet she could scarcely mean to return," muttered Foreboding, "or she would assuredly have left some message with the girl." I then thought to myself what a hard thing it would be, if, after having made up my mind to assume the yoke of matrimony, I should be disappointed of the woman of my choice. "Well, after all," thought I, "I can scarcely be disappointed; if such an ugly scoundrel as Sylvester had no difficulty in getting such a

nice wife as Ursula, surely I, who am not a tenth part so ugly, cannot fail to obtain the hand of Isopel Berners, uncommonly fine damsel though she be. Husbands do not grow upon hedge-rows; she is merely gone after a little business and will return to-morrow."

Comforted in some degree by these hopeful imaginings, I retired to my tent, and went to sleep.

CHAPTER XVI.

GLOOMY FOREBODINGS.—THE POSTMAN'S MOTHER.—THE LETTER.—BEARS AND BARONS.—THE BEST OF ADVICE.

NOTHING occurred to me of any particular moment during the following day. Isopel Berners did not return; but Mr. Petulengro and his companions came home from the fair early in the morning. When I saw him, which was about midday, I found him with his face bruised and swelled. It appeared that, some time after I had left him, he himself perceived that the jockeys with whom he was playing cards were cheating him and his companion; a quarrel ensued, which terminated in a fight between Mr. Petulengro and one of the jockeys, which lasted some time, and in which Mr. Petulengro, though he eventually came off victor, was considerably beaten. His bruises, in conjunction with his pecuniary loss, which amounted to about seven pounds, were the cause of his being much out of humour; before night, however, he had re-

turned to his usual philosophic frame of mind, and, coming up to me as I was walking about, apologized for his behaviour on the preceding day, and assured me that he was determined, from that time forward, never to quarrel with a friend for giving him good advice.

Two more days passed, and still Isopel Berners did not return. Gloomy thoughts and forebodings filled my mind. During the day I wandered about the neighbouring roads in the hopes of catching an early glimpse of her and her returning vehicle; and at night lay awake, tossing about on my hard couch, listening to the rustle of every leaf, and occasionally thinking that I heard the sound of her wheels upon the distant road. Once at midnight, just as I was about to fall into unconsciousness, I suddenly started up, for I was convinced that I heard the sound of wheels. I listened most anxiously, and the sound of wheels striking against stones was certainly plain enough. "She comes at last," thought I, and for a few moments I felt as if a mountain had been removed from my breast;—"here she comes at last, now, how shall I receive her? Oh," thought I, "I will receive her rather coolly, just as if I was not particularly anxious about her—that's the way to

manage these women." The next moment the sound became very loud, rather too loud, I thought, to proceed from her wheels, and then by degrees became fainter. Rushing out of my tent, I hurried up the path to the top of the dingle, where I heard the sound distinctly enough, but it was going from me, and evidently proceeded from something much larger than the cart of Isopel. I could, moreover, hear the stamping of a horse's hoof at a lumbering trot. Those only whose hopes have been wrought up to a high pitch, and then suddenly dashed down, can imagine what I felt at that moment; and yet when I returned to my lonely tent, and lay down on my hard pallet, the voice of conscience told me that the misery I was then undergoing, I had fully merited, from the unkind manner in which I had intended to receive her, when for a brief minute I supposed that she had returned.

It was on the morning after this affair, and the fourth, if I forget not, from the time of Isopel's departure, that, as I was seated on my stone at the bottom of the dingle, getting my breakfast, I heard an unknown voice from the path above—apparently that of a person descending—exclaim, "Here's a strange place

to bring a letter to;" and presently an old woman, with a belt round her middle, to which was attached a leathern bag, made her appearance, and stood before me.

"Well, if I ever!" said she, as she looked about her. "My good gentlewoman," said I, "pray what may you please to want?" "Gentlewoman!" said the old dame, "please to want! —well, I call that speaking civilly, at any rate. It is true, civil words cost nothing; nevertheless, we do not always get them. What I please to want is to deliver a letter to a young man in this place; perhaps you be he?" "What 's the name on the letter?" said I, getting up and going to her. "There is no name upon it," said she, taking a letter out of her scrip, and looking at it. "It is directed to the young man in Mumper's Dingle." "Then it is for me, I make no doubt," said I, stretching out my hand to take it. "Please to pay me ninepence first," said the old woman. "However," said she, after a moment's thought, "civility is civility, and, being rather a scarce article, should meet with some return. Here 's the letter, young man, and I hope you will pay for it; for if you do not I must pay the postage myself." "You are the postwoman, I suppose," said I, as I took the

letter. "I am the postman's mother," said the old woman; but as he has a wide beat, I help him as much as I can, and I generally carry letters to places like this, to which he is afraid to come himself." "You say the postage is ninepence," said I, "here's a shilling." "Well, I call that honourable," said the old woman, taking the shilling, and putting it into her pocket —"here's your change, young man," said she, offering me threepence. "Pray keep that for yourself," said I; "you deserve it for your trouble." "Well, I call that genteel," said the old woman; "and as one good turn deserves another, since you look as if you couldn't read, I will read your letter for you. Let's see it; it's from some young woman or other, I dare say." "Thank you," said I, "but I can read." "All the better for you," said the old woman; "your being able to read will frequently save you a penny, for that's the charge I generally make for reading letters; though, as you behaved so genteelly to me, I should have charged you nothing. Well, if you can read, why don't you open the letter, instead of keeping it hanging between your finger and thumb?" "I am in no hurry to open it," said I, with a sigh. The old woman looked at me for a moment—"Well, young

man," said she, "there are some—especially those who can read—who don't like to open their letters when anybody is by, more especially when they come from young women. Well, I won't intrude upon you, but leave you alone with your letter. I wish it may contain something pleasant. God bless you," and with these words she departed.

I sat down on my stone, with my letter in my hand. I knew perfectly well that it could have come from no other person than Isopel Berners; but what did the letter contain? I guessed tolerably well what its purport was—an eternal farewell! yet I was afraid to open the letter, lest my expectation should be confirmed. There I sat with the letter, putting off the evil moment as long as possible. At length I glanced at the direction, which was written in a fine bold hand, and was directed, as the old woman had said, to the young man in "Mumper's Dingle," with the addition, near . . . ., in the county of . . . . Suddenly the idea occurred to me, that, after all, the letter might not contain an eternal farewell; and that Isopel might have written, requesting me to join her. Could it be so? "Alas! no," presently said Foreboding. At last I became ashamed of my weakness. The letter must be

opened sooner or later. Why not at once? So as the bather who, for a considerable time has stood shivering on the bank, afraid to take the decisive plunge, suddenly takes it, I tore open the letter almost before I was aware. I had no sooner done so than a paper fell out. I examined it; it contained a lock of bright flaxen hair. "This is no good sign," said I, as I thrust the lock and paper into my bosom, and proceeded to read the letter, which ran as follows:—

"TO THE YOUNG MAN IN MUMPER'S DINGLE.

"SIR,—I send these lines, with the hope and trust that they will find you well, even as I am myself at this moment, and in much better spirits, for my own are not such as I could wish they were, being sometimes rather hysterical and vapourish, and at other times, and most often, very low. I am at a sea-port, and am just going on shipboard; and when you get these I shall be on the salt waters, on my way to a distant country, and leaving my own behind me, which I do not expect ever to see again.

"And now, young man, I will, in the first place, say something about the manner in which I quitted you. It must have seemed somewhat singular to you that I went away without taking

any leave, or giving you the slightest hint that I was going; but I did not do so without considerable reflection. I was afraid that I should not be able to support a leave-taking; and as you had said that you were determined to go wherever I did, I thought it best not to tell you at all; for I did not think it advisable that you should go with me, and I wished to have no dispute.

"In the second place, I wish to say something about an offer of wedlock which you made me; perhaps, young man, had you made it at the first period of our acquaintance, I should have accepted it, but you did not, and kept putting off and putting off, and behaving in a very strange manner, till I could stand your conduct no longer, but determined upon leaving you and Old England, which last step I had been long thinking about; so when you made your offer at last, everything was arranged—my cart and donkey engaged to be sold—and the greater part of my things disposed of. However, young man, when you did make it, I frankly tell you that I had half a mind to accept it; at last, however, after very much consideration, I thought it best to leave you for ever, because, for some time past, I had become almost convinced, that though

with a wonderful deal of learning, and exceedingly shrewd in some things, you were—pray don't be offended—at the root mad! and though mad people, I have been told, sometimes make very good husbands, I was unwilling that your friends, if you had any, should say that Belle Berners, the workhouse girl, took advantage of your infirmity; for there is no concealing that I was born and bred up in a workhouse; notwithstanding that, my blood is better than your own, and as good as the best; you having yourself told me that my name is a noble name, and once, if I mistake not, that it was the same word as baron, which is the same thing as bear; and that to be called in old times a bear was considered as a great compliment—the bear being a mighty strong animal, on which account our forefathers called all their great fighting-men barons, which is the same as bears.

"However, setting matters of blood and family entirely aside, many thanks to you, young man, from poor Belle, for the honour you did her in making that same offer; for, after all, it is an honour to receive an honourable offer, which she could see clearly yours was, with no floriness nor chaff in it; but, on the contrary, entire sincerity. She assures you that she shall always bear it and

yourself in mind, whether on land or water ; and as a proof of the good-will she bears to you, she has sent you a lock of the hair which she wears on her head, which you were often looking at, and were pleased to call flax, which word she supposes you meant as a compliment, even as the old people meant to pass a compliment to their great folks, when they called them bears ; though she cannot help thinking that they might have found an animal as strong as a bear, and somewhat less uncouth, to call their great folks after : even as she thinks yourself, amongst your great store of words, might have found something a little more genteel to call her hair after than flax, which, though strong and useful, is rather a coarse and common kind of article.

"And as another proof of the good-will she bears to you, she sends you, along with the lock, a piece of advice, which is worth all the hair in the world, to say nothing of the flax.

"*Fear God*, and take your own part. There 's Bible in that, young man ; see how Moses feared God, and how he took his own part against everybody who meddled with him. And see how David feared God, and took his own part against all the bloody enemies which surrounded him—so fear God, young man, and never give

in! The world can bully, and is fond, provided it sees a man in a kind of difficulty, of getting about him, calling him coarse names, and even going so far as to hustle him; but the world, like all bullies, carries a white feather in its tail, and no sooner sees the man taking off his coat, and offering to fight its best, than it scatters here and there, and is always civil to him afterwards. So when folks are disposed to ill-treat you, young man, say, 'Lord have mercy upon me!' and then tip them Long Melford, to which, as the saying goes, there is nothing comparable for shortness all the world over; and these last words, young man, are the last you will ever have from her who is, nevertheless,

"Your affectionate female servant,

"Isopel Berners."

After reading the letter I sat for some time motionless, holding it in my hand. The day-dream in which I had been a little time before indulging, of marrying Isopel Berners, of going with her to America, and having by her a large progeny, who were to assist me in felling trees, cultivating the soil, and who would take care of me when I was old, was now thoroughly dispelled. Isopel had deserted me, and was gone to America

by herself, where, perhaps, she would marry some other person, and would bear him a progeny, who would do for him what in my dream I had hoped my progeny by her would do for me. Then the thought came into my head that though she was gone I might follow her to America, but then I thought that if I did I might not find her; America was a very large place, and I did not know the port to which she was bound; but I could follow her to the port from which she had sailed, and there possibly discover the port to which she was bound; but then I did not even know the port from which she had set out, for Isopel had not dated her letter from any place. Suddenly it occurred to me that the post-mark on the letter would tell me from whence it came, so I forthwith looked at the back of the letter, and in the post-mark read the name of a well known and not very distant sea-port. I then knew with tolerable certainty the port where she had embarked, and I almost determined to follow her, but I almost instantly determined to do no such thing. Isopel Berners had abandoned me, and I would not follow her; "perhaps," whispered Pride, "if I overtook her, she would only despise me for running after her; and it also told me pretty roundly that, provided I ran after her, whether I

overtook her or not, I should heartily despise myself." So I determined not to follow Isopel Berners ; I took her lock of hair, and looked at it, then put it in her letter, which I folded up and carefully stowed away, resolved to keep both for ever, but I determined not to follow her. Two or three times, however, during the day, I wavered in my determination, and was again and again almost tempted to follow her, but every succeeding time the temptation was fainter. In the evening I left the dingle, and sat down with Mr. Petulengro and his family by the door of his tent ; Mr. Petulengro soon began talking of the letter which I had received in the morning. "Is it not from Miss Berners, brother?" said he. I told him it was. "Is she coming back, brother?" "Never," said I ; "she is gone to America, and has deserted me." "I always knew that you two were never destined for each other," said he. "How did you know that?" I inquired. "The dook told me so, brother ; you are born to be a great traveller." "Well," said I, "if I had gone with her to America, as I was thinking of doing, I should have been a great traveller." "You are to travel in another direction, brother," said he. "I wish you would tell me all about my future wanderings," said I. "I can't, brother," said Mr. Petulengro,

"there 's a power of clouds before my eye." "You are a poor seer, after all," said I, and getting up, I retired to my dingle and my tent, where I betook myself to my bed, and there, knowing the worst, and being no longer agitated by apprehension, nor agonized by expectation, I was soon buried in a deep slumber, the first which I had fallen into for several nights.

CHAPTER XVII.

THE PUBLIC-HOUSE.—LANDLORD ON HIS LEGS AGAIN.—A BLOW IN SEASON.—THE WAY OF THE WORLD.—THE GRATEFUL MIND.—THE HORSE'S NEIGH.

It was rather late on the following morning when I awoke. At first I was almost unconscious of what had occurred on the preceding day; recollection, however, by degrees returned, and I felt a deep melancholy coming over me, but perfectly aware that no advantage could be derived from the indulgence of such a feeling, I sprang up, prepared my breakfast, which I ate with a tolerable appetite, and then left the dingle, and betook myself to the gypsy encampment, where I entered into discourse with various Romanies, both male and female. After some time, feeling myself in better spirits, I determined to pay another visit to the landlord of the public-house. From the position of his affairs when I had last visited him, I entertained rather gloomy ideas with respect to his present circumstances. I imagined that I should either find him alone in his kitchen smoking

a wretched pipe, or in company with some surly bailiff or his follower, whom his friend the brewer had sent into the house in order to take possession of his effects.

Nothing more entirely differing from either of these anticipations could have presented itself to my view than what I saw about one o'clock in the afternoon, when I entered the house. I had come, though somewhat in want of consolation myself, to offer any consolation which was at my command to my acquaintance Catchpole, and perhaps like many other people who go to a house with "drops of compassion trembling on their eyelids," I felt rather disappointed at finding that no compassion was necessary. The house was thronged with company, the cries for ale and porter, hot brandy and water, cold gin and water, were numerous; moreover, no desire to receive and not to pay for the landlord's liquids was manifested—on the contrary, everybody seemed disposed to play the most honourable part: "Landlord, here 's the money for this glass of brandy and water—do me the favour to take it; all right, remember I have paid you." "Landlord, here 's the money for the pint of half-and-half—fourpence halfpenny, a'n't it?—here 's sixpence; keep the change—confound the change!" The landlord,

assisted by his niece, bustled about; his brow erect, his cheeks plumped out, and all his features exhibiting a kind of surly satisfaction. Wherever he moved, marks of the most cordial amity were shown him, hands were thrust out to grasp his, nor were looks of respect, admiration, nay almost of adoration, wanting. I observed one fellow, as the landlord advanced, take the pipe out of his mouth, and gaze upon him with a kind of grin of wonder, probably much the same as his ancestor, the Saxon lout of old, put on when he saw his idol Thur dressed in a new kirtle. To avoid the press, I got into a corner, where, on a couple of chairs sat two respectable-looking individuals, whether farmers or sow-gelders, I know not, but highly respectable-looking, who were discoursing about the landlord. "Such another," said one, "you will not find in a summer's day." "No, nor in the whole of England," said the other. "Tom of Hopton," said the first: "ah! Tom of Hopton," echoed the other; "the man who could beat Tom of Hopton could beat the world." "I glory in him," said the first. "So do I," said the second, "I 'll back him against the world. Let me hear any one say anything against him, and if I don't . . . ." then, looking at me, he added, "have you anything to say against him, young

man?" "Not a word," said I, "save that he regularly puts me out." "He 'll put any one out," said the man, "any one out of conceit with himself;" then, lifting a mug to his mouth, he added, with a hiccough, "I drink his health." Presently the landlord, as he moved about, observing me, stopped short: "Ah!" said he, "are you here? I am glad to see you, come this way." "Stand back," said he to his company, as I followed him to the bar, "stand back for me and this gentleman." Two or three young fellows were in the bar, seemingly sporting yokels, drinking sherry and smoking. "Come, gentlemen," said the landlord, "clear the bar, I must have a clear bar for me and my friend here." "Landlord, what will you take," said one, "a glass of sherry? I know you like it." ". . . . sherry and you too," said the landlord, "I want neither sherry nor yourself; didn't you hear what I told you?" "All right, old fellow," said the other, shaking the landlord by the hand, "all right, don't wish to intrude—but I suppose when you and your friend have done, I may come in again;" then, with "a sarvant, sir," to me, he took himself into the kitchen, followed by the rest of the sporting yokels.

Thereupon the landlord, taking a bottle of ale from a basket, uncorked it, and pouring the con-

tents into two large glasses, handed me one, and motioning me to sit down, placed himself by me; then, emptying his own glass at a draught, he gave a kind of grunt of satisfaction, and fixing his eyes upon the opposite side of the bar, remained motionless, without saying a word, buried apparently in important cogitations. With respect to myself, I swallowed my ale more leisurely, and was about to address my friend, when his niece, coming into the bar, said that more and more customers were arriving, and how she should supply their wants she did not know, unless her uncle would get up and help her.

"The customers!" said the landlord, "let the scoundrels wait till you have time to serve them, or till I have leisure to see after them." "The kitchen won't contain half of them," said his niece. "Then let them sit out abroad," said the landlord. "But there are not benches enough, uncle," said the niece. "Then let them stand or sit on the ground," said the uncle, "what care I? I 'll let them know that the man who beat Tom of Hopton stands as well again on his legs as ever." Then opening a side door which led from the bar into the back yard, he beckoned me to follow him. "You treat your customers in rather a cavalier manner," said I, when we were alone together in the yard.

"Don't I?" said the landlord; "and I 'll treat them more so yet; now I have got the whip-hand of the rascals I intend to keep it. I dare say you are a bit surprised with regard to the change which has come over things since you were last here. I 'll tell you how it happened. You remember in what a desperate condition you found me, thinking of changing my religion, selling my soul to the man in black, and then going and hanging myself like Pontius Pilate: and I dare say you can't have forgotten how you gave me good advice, made me drink ale, and give up sherry. Well, after you were gone, I felt all the better for your talk, and what you had made me drink, and it was a mercy that I did feel better; for my niece was gone out, poor thing, and I was left alone in the house, without a soul to look at, or to keep me from doing myself a mischief in case I was so inclined. Well, things wore on in this way till it grew dusk, when in came that blackguard Hunter with his train to drink at my expense, and to insult me as usual: there were more than a dozen of them, and a pretty set they looked. Well, they ordered about in a very free and easy manner for upwards of an hour and a half, occasionally sneering and jeering at me, as they had been in the habit of

doing for some time past; so, as I said before, things wore on, and other customers came in, who, though they did not belong to Hunter's gang, also passed off their jokes upon me; for, as you perhaps know, we English are a set of low hounds, who will always take part with the many by way of making ourselves safe, and currying favour with the stronger side. I said little or nothing, for my spirits had again become very low, and I was verily scared and afraid. All of a sudden I thought of the ale which I had drank in the morning, and of the good it did me then, so I went into the bar, opened another bottle, took a glass, and felt better; so I took another, and feeling better still, I went back into the kitchen just as Hunter and his crew were about leaving. 'Mr. Hunter,' said I, 'you and your people will please to pay me for what you have had?' 'What do you mean by my people?' said he, with an oath. 'Ah! what do you mean by calling us his people?' said the clan. 'We are nobody's people;' and then there was a pretty load of abuse, and threatening to serve me out. 'Well,' said I, 'I was perhaps wrong to call them your people, and beg your pardon and theirs. And now you will please to pay me for what you

have had yourself, and afterwards I can settle with them.' 'I shall pay you when I think fit,' said Hunter. 'Yes,' said the rest, 'and so shall we. We shall pay you when we think fit.' 'I tell you what,' said Hunter, 'I conceives I do such an old fool as you an honour when I comes into his house and drinks his beer, and goes away without paying for it; and then there was a roar of laughter from everybody, and almost all said the same thing. 'Now do you please to pay me, Mr. Hunter?' said I. 'Pay you!' said Hunter; 'pay you! Yes, here 's the pay;' and thereupon he held out his thumb, twirling it round till it just touched my nose. I can't tell you what I felt that moment; a kind of madhouse thrill came upon me, and all I know is, that I bent back as far as I could, then lunging out, struck him under the ear, sending him reeling two or three yards, when he fell on the floor. I wish you had but seen how my company looked at me and at each other. One or two of the clan went to raise Hunter, and get him to fight, but it was no go; though he was not killed, he had had enough for that evening. Oh, I wish you had seen my customers; those who did not belong to the clan, but had taken part with them, and

helped to jeer and flout me, now came and shook me by the hand, wishing me joy, and saying as how 'I was a brave fellow, and had served the bully right!' As for the clan, they all said Hunter was bound to do me justice; so they made him pay me what he owed for himself, and the reckoning of those among them who said they had no money. Two or three of them then led him away, while the rest stayed behind, and flattered me, and worshipped me, and called Hunter all kinds of dogs' names. What do you think of that?"

"Why," said I, "it makes good what I read in a letter which I received yesterday. It is just the way of the world."

"A'n't it!" said the landlord. "Well, that a'n't all; let me go on. Good fortune never yet came alone. In about an hour comes home my poor niece, almost in high sterricks with joy, smiling and sobbing. She had been to the clergyman of M . . ., the great preacher, to whose church she was in the habit of going, and to whose daughters she was well known; and to him she told a lamentable tale about my distresses, and about the snares which had been laid for my soul; and so well did she plead my cause, and so strong did the young ladies back all she

said, that the good clergyman promised to stand my friend, and to lend me sufficient money to satisfy the brewer, and to get my soul out of the snares of the man in black; and sure enough the next morning the two young ladies brought me the fifty pounds, which I forthwith carried to the brewer, who was monstrously civil, saying that he hoped any little misunderstanding we had had would not prevent our being good friends in future. That a'n't all; the people of the neighbouring country hearing as if by art witchcraft that I had licked Hunter, and was on good terms with the brewer, forthwith began to come in crowds to look at me, pay me homage, and be my customers. Moreover, fifty scoundrels who owed me money, and who would have seen me starve rather than help me as long as they considered me a down pin, remembered their debts, and came and paid me more than they owed. That a'n't all; the brewer, being about to establish a stage-coach and three, to run across the country, says it shall stop and change horses at my house, and the passengers breakfast and sup as it goes and returns. He wishes me—whom he calls the best man in England—to give his son lessons in boxing, which he says he considers a fine manly English art, and a great defence

against Popery — notwithstanding that only a month ago, when he considered me a down pin, he was in the habit of railing against it as a blackguard practice, and against me as a blackguard for following it: so I am going to commence with young hopeful to-morrow."

"I really cannot help congratulating you on your good fortune," said I.

"That a'n't all," said the landlord. "This very morning the folks of our parish made me churchwarden, which they would no more have done a month ago, when they considered me a down pin, than they . . . ."

"Mercy upon us!" said I, "if fortune pours in upon you in this manner, who knows but that within a year they may make you justice of the peace."

"Who knows, indeed!" said the landlord. "Well, I will prove myself worthy of my good luck by showing the grateful mind—not to those who would be kind to me now, but to those who were, when the days were rather gloomy. My customers shall have abundance of rough language, but I'll knock any one down who says anything against the clergyman who lent me the fifty pounds, or against the Church of England, of which he is parson and I am churchwarden.

I am also ready to do anything in reason for him who paid me for the ale he drank, when I shouldn't have had the heart to collar him for the money had he refused to pay; who never jeered or flouted me like the rest of my customers when I was a down pin—and though he refused to fight cross *for* me, was never cross *with* me, but listened to all I had to say, and gave me all kinds of good advice. Now who do you think I mean by this last? why, who but yourself—who on earth but yourself? The parson is a good man and a great preacher, and I'll knock anybody down who says to the contrary; and I mention him first, because why; he's a gentleman, and you a tinker. But I am by no means sure you are not the best friend of the two; for I doubt, do you see, whether I should have had the fifty pounds but for you. You persuaded me to give up that silly drink they call sherry, and drink ale; and what was it but drinking ale which gave me courage to knock down that fellow Hunter—and knocking him down was, I verily believe, the turning point of my disorder. God don't love those who won't strike out for themselves; and as far as I can calculate with respect to time, it was just the moment after I had knocked down Hunter, that the parson con-

sented to lend me the money, and everything began to grow civil to me. So, dash my buttons if I show the ungrateful mind to you! I don't offer to knock anybody down for you, because why—I dare say you can knock a body down yourself; but I'll offer something more to the purpose; as my business is wonderfully on the increase, I shall want somebody to help me in serving my customers, and keeping them in order. If you choose to come and serve for your board, and what they'll give you, give me your fist; or if you like ten shillings a week better than their sixpences and ha'pence, only say so—though, to be open with you, I believe you would make twice ten shillings out of them—the sneaking, fawning, curry-favouring humbugs!"

"I am much obliged to you," said I, "for your handsome offer, which, however, I am obliged to decline."

"Why so?" said the landlord.

"I am not fit for service," said I; "moreover, I am about to leave this part of the country." As I spoke, a horse neighed in the stable. "What horse is that?" said I.

"It belongs to a cousin of mine, who put it into my hands yesterday, in hopes that I might get rid of it for him, though he would no more

have done so a week ago, when he considered me a down pin, than he would have given the horse away. Are you fond of horses?"

"Very much," said I.

"Then come and look at it." He led me into the stable, where, in a stall, stood a noble-looking animal.

"Dear me," said I, "I saw this horse at . . . . fair."

"Like enough," said the landlord; "he was there, and was offered for seventy pounds, but didn't find a bidder at any price. What do you think of him?"

"He's a splendid creature."

"I am no judge of horses," said the landlord; "but I am told he's a first-rate trotter, good leaper, and has some of the blood of Syntax. What does all that signify?—the game is against his master, who is a down pin, is thinking of emigrating, and wants money confoundedly. He asked seventy pounds at the fair; but, between ourselves, he would be glad to take fifty here."

"I almost wish," said I, "that I were a rich squire."

"You would buy him then," said the landlord. Here he mused for some time, with a very profound look. "It would be a rum thing,"

said he, "if, some time or other, that horse should come into your hands. Didn't you hear how he neighed when you talked about leaving the country. My granny was a wise woman, and was up to all kind of signs and wonders, sounds and noises, the interpretation of the language of birds and animals, crowing and lowing, neighing and braying. If she had been here, she would have said at once that that horse was fated to carry you away. On that point, however, I can say nothing, for under fifty pounds no one can have him. Are you taking that money out of your pocket to pay me for the ale? That won't do; nothing to pay; I invited you this time. Now if you are going, you had best get into the road through the yard-gate. I won't trouble you to make your way through the kitchen and my fine-weather company—confound them!"

CHAPTER XVIII.

MR. PETULENGRO'S DEVICE.—THE LEATHERN PURSE.—CONSENT TO PURCHASE A HORSE.

As I returned along the road I met Mr. Petulengro and one of his companions, who told me that they were bound for the public-house; whereupon I informed Jasper how I had seen in the stable the horse which we had admired at the fair. "I shouldn't wonder if you buy that horse after all, brother," said Mr. Petulengro. With a smile at the absurdity of such a supposition, I left him and his companion, and betook myself to the dingle. In the evening I received a visit from Mr. Petulengro, who forthwith commenced talking about the horse, which he had again seen, the landlord having shown it to him on learning that he was a friend of mine. He told me that the horse pleased him more than ever, he having examined his points with more accuracy than he had an opportunity of doing on the first occasion, concluding by pressing me to

buy him. I begged him to desist from such foolish importunity, assuring him that I had never so much money in all my life as would enable me to purchase the horse. Whilst this discourse was going on, Mr. Petulengro and myself were standing together in the midst of the dingle. Suddenly he began to move round me in a very singular manner, making strange motions with his hands, and frightful contortions with his features, till I became alarmed, and asked him whether he had not lost his senses? Whereupon, ceasing his movements and contortions, he assured me that he had not, but had merely been seized with a slight dizziness, and then once more returned to the subject of the horse. Feeling myself very angry, I told him that if he continued persecuting me in this manner, I should be obliged to quarrel with him; adding, that I believed his only motive for asking me to buy the animal was to insult my poverty. "Pretty poverty," said he, "with fifty pounds in your pocket; however, I have heard say that it is always the custom of your rich people to talk of their poverty, more especially when they wish to avoid laying out money." Surprised at his saying that I had fifty pounds in my pocket, I asked him what he meant; whereupon he told me that

he was very sure that I had fifty pounds in my pocket, offering to lay me five shillings to that effect. "Done!" said I; "I have scarcely more than the fifth part of what you say." "I know better, brother," said Mr. Petulengro; "and if you only pull out what you have in the pocket of your slop, I am sure you will have lost your wager." Putting my hand into the pocket, I felt something which I had never felt there before, and pulling it out, perceived that it was a clumsy leathern purse, which I found, on opening, contained four ten-pound notes, and several pieces of gold. "Didn't I tell you so, brother?" said Mr. Petulengro. "Now, in the first place, please to pay me the five shillings you have lost." "This is only a foolish piece of pleasantry," said I; "you put it into my pocket whilst you were moving about me, making faces like a distracted person. Here, take your purse back." "I?" said Mr. Petulengro, "not I, indeed! don't think I am such a fool. I have won my wager, so pay me the five shillings, brother." "Do drop this folly," said I, "and take your purse;" and I flung it on the ground. "Brother," said Mr. Petulengro, "you were talking of quarrelling with me just now. I tell you now one thing, which is, that if you do not

take back the purse, I will quarrel with you; and it shall be for good and all. I'll drop your acquaintance, no longer call you my pal, and not even say sarshan to you when I meet you by the road-side. Hir mi diblis I never will." I saw by Jasper's look and tone that he was in earnest, and, as I had really a regard for the strange being, I scarcely knew what to do. "Now, be persuaded, brother," said Mr. Petulengro, taking up the purse, and handing it to me; "be persuaded; put the purse into your pocket, and buy the horse." "Well," said I, "if I did so, would you acknowledge the horse to be yours, and receive the money again as soon as I should be able to repay you?"

"I would, brother, I would," said he; "return me the money as soon as you please, provided you buy the horse." "What motive have you for wishing me to buy that horse?" said I. "He's to be sold for fifty pounds," said Jasper, "and is worth four times that sum; "though, like many a splendid bargain, he is now going a begging; buy him, and I'm confident that, in a little time, a grand gentleman of your appearance may have anything he asks for him, and found a fortune by his means. Moreover, brother, I want to dispose of this fifty pounds in a

safe manner. If you don't take it, I shall fool it away in no time, perhaps at card-playing, for you saw how I was cheated by those blackguard jockeys the other day—we gyptians don't know how to take care of money: our best plan when we have got a handful of guineas is to make buttons with them; but I have plenty of golden buttons, and don't wish to be troubled with more, so you can do me no greater favour than vesting the money in this speculation, by which my mind will be relieved of considerable care and trouble for some time at least."

Perceiving that I still hesitated, he said, "Perhaps, brother, you think that I did not come honestly by the money: by the honestest manner in the world, brother, for it is the money I earnt by fighting in the ring: I did not steal it, brother, nor did I get it by disposing of spavined donkeys, or glandered ponies—nor is it, brother, the profits of my wife's witchcraft and dukkerin."

"But," said I, "you had better employ it in your traffic." "I have plenty of money for my traffic, independent of this capital," said Mr. Petulengro; "ay, brother, and enough besides to back the husband of my wife's sister, Sylvester,

against Slammocks of the Chong gav for twenty pounds, which I am thinking of doing."

"But," said I, "after all, the horse may have found another purchaser by this time." "Not he," said Mr. Petulengro, "there is nobody in this neighbourhood to purchase a horse like that, unless it be your lordship—so take the money, brother," and he thrust the purse into my hand. Allowing myself to be persuaded, I kept possession of the purse. "Are you satisfied now?" said I. "By no means, brother," said Mr. Petulengro, "you will please to pay me the five shillings which you lost to me." "Why," said I, "the fifty pounds which I found in my pocket were not mine, but put in by yourself." "That 's nothing to do with the matter, brother," said Mr. Petulengro; "I betted you five shillings that you had fifty pounds in your pocket, which sum you had: I did not say that they were your own, but merely that you had fifty pounds; you will therefore pay me, brother, or I shall not consider you an honourable man." Not wishing to have any dispute about such a matter, I took five shillings out of my under pocket, and gave them to him. Mr. Petulengro took the money with great glee, observing—"These five shillings I

will take to the public-house forthwith, and spend in drinking with four of my brethren, and doing so will give me an opportunity of telling the landlord that I have found a customer for his horse, and that you are the man. It will be as well to secure the horse as soon as possible; for though the dook tells me that the horse is intended for you, I have now and then found that the dook is, like myself, somewhat given to lying."

He then departed, and I remained alone in the dingle. I thought at first that I had committed a great piece of folly in consenting to purchase this horse; I might find no desirable purchaser for him until the money in my possession should be totally exhausted, and then I might be compelled to sell him for half the price I had given for him, or be even glad to find a person who would receive him at a gift; I should then remain sans horse, and indebted to Mr. Petulengro. Nevertheless, it was possible that I might sell the horse very advantageously, and by so doing, obtain a fund sufficient to enable me to execute some grand enterprise or other. My present way of life afforded no prospect of support, whereas the purchase of the horse did afford a possibility of bettering my condition, so, after all, had I not done right in consenting to purchase the horse?

the purchase was to be made with another person's property it is true, and I did not exactly like the idea of speculating with another person's property, but Mr. Petulengro had thrust his money upon me, and if I lost his money, he could have no one but himself to blame; so I persuaded myself that I had upon the whole done right, and having come to that persuasion I soon began to enjoy the idea of finding myself on horseback again, and figured to myself all kinds of strange adventures which I should meet with on the roads before the horse and I should part company.

CHAPTER XIX.

TRYING THE HORSE.—THE FEATS OF TAWNO.—MAN WITH THE RED WAISTCOAT.—DISPOSAL OF PROPERTY.

I SAW nothing more of Mr. Petulengro that evening—on the morrow, however, he came and informed me that he had secured the horse for me, and that I was to go and pay for it at noon. At the hour appointed, therefore, I went with Mr. Petulengro and Tawno to the public, where, as before, there was a crowd of company. The landlord received us in the bar with marks of much satisfaction and esteem, made us sit down, and treated us with some excellent mild draught ale. "Who do you think has been here this morning?" he said to me, "why that fellow in black, who came to carry me off to a house of Popish devotion, where I was to pass seven days and nights in meditation, as I think he called it, before I publicly renounced the religion of my country. I read him a pretty lecture, calling him several unhandsome names, and asking him

what he meant by attempting to seduce a churchwarden of the Church of England. I tell you what, he ran some danger; for some of my customers, learning his errand, laid hold on him, and were about to toss him in a blanket, and then duck him in the horse-pond. I, however, interfered, and said, "that what he came about was between me and him, and that it was no business of theirs." To tell you the truth, I felt pity for the poor devil, more especially when I considered that they merely sided against him because they thought him the weakest, and that they would have wanted to serve me in the same manner had they considered me a down pin; so I rescued him from their hands, told him not to be afraid, for that nobody should touch him, and offered to treat him to some cold gin and water with a lump of sugar in it; and, on his refusing, told him that he had better make himself scarce, which he did, and I hope I shall never see him again. So I suppose you are come for the horse; mercy upon us! who would have thought you would have become the purchaser? The horse, however, seemed to know it by his neighing. How did you ever come by the money? however, that 's no matter of mine. I suppose you are strongly backed by certain friends you have."

I informed the landlord that he was right in supposing that I came for the horse, but that, before I paid for him, I should wish to prove his capabilities. "With all my heart," said the landlord. "You shall mount him this moment." Then going into the stable, he saddled and bridled the horse, and presently brought him out before the door. I mounted him, Mr. Petulengro putting a heavy whip into my hand, and saying a few words to me in his own mysterious language. "The horse wants no whip," said the landlord. "Hold your tongue, daddy," said Mr. Petulengro. "My pal knows quite well what to do with the whip, he 's not going to beat the horse with it." About four hundred yards from the house there was a hill, to the foot of which the road ran almost on a perfect level; towards the foot of this hill I trotted the horse, who set off at a long, swift pace, seemingly at the rate of about sixteen miles an hour. On reaching the foot of the hill, I wheeled the animal round, and trotted him towards the house—the horse sped faster than before. Ere he had advanced a hundred yards, I took off my hat, in obedience to the advice which Mr. Petulengro had given me, in his own language, and holding it over the horse's head, commenced drumming on the crown

with the knob of the whip; the horse gave a slight start, but instantly recovering himself, continued his trot till he arrived at the door of the public-house, amidst the acclamations of the company, who had all rushed out of the house to be spectators of what was going on. "I see now what you wanted the whip for," said the landlord, "and sure enough, that drumming on your hat was no bad way of learning whether the horse was quiet or not. Well, did you ever see a more quiet horse, or a better trotter?" "My cob shall trot against him," said a fellow dressed in velveteen, mounted on a low powerful-looking animal. "My cob shall trot against him to the hill and back again—come on!" We both started; the cob kept up gallantly against the horse for about half the way to the hill, when he began to lose ground; at the foot of the hill he was about fifteen yards behind. Whereupon, I turned slowly and waited for him. We then set off towards the house, but now the cob had no chance, being at least twenty yards behind when I reached the door. This running of horses, the wild uncouth forms around me, and the ale and beer which were being guzzled from pots and flagons, put me wonderfully in mind of the ancient horse-races of the heathen north.

I almost imagined myself Gunnar of Hlitharend at the race of . . . .

"Are you satisfied?" said the landlord. "Didn't you tell me that he could leap?" I demanded. "I am told he can," said the landlord; "but I can't consent that he should be tried in that way, as he might be damaged." "That 's right!" said Mr. Petulengro, "don't trust my pal to leap that horse, he 'll merely fling him down, and break his neck and his own. There 's a better man than he close by; let him get on his back and leap him." "You mean yourself, I suppose," said the landlord. "Well, I call that talking modestly, and nothing becomes a young man more than modesty." "It a'n't I, daddy," said Mr. Petulengro. "Here 's the man," said he, pointing to Tawno. "Here 's the horse-leaper of the world!" "You mean the horse-back breaker," said the landlord. "That big fellow would break down my cousin's horse." "Why he weighs only sixteen stone," said Mr. Petulengro. "And his sixteen stone, with his way of handling a horse, does not press so much as any other one's thirteen. Only let him get on the horse's back, and you 'll see what he can do!" "No," said the landlord, "it won't do." Whereupon Mr. Petulengro became very much

excited ; and pulling out a handful of money, said, "I 'll tell you what, I 'll forfeit these guineas if my black pal there does the horse any kind of damage ; duck me in the horse-pond if I don't." "Well," said the landlord, "for the sport of the thing I consent, so let your white pal get down, and your black pal mount as soon as he pleases." I felt rather mortified at Mr. Petulengro's interference ; and showed no disposition to quit my seat ; whereupon he came up to me and said, "Now, brother, do get out of the saddle—you are no bad hand at trotting, I am willing to acknowledge that ; but at leaping a horse there is no one like Tawno. Let every dog be praised for his own gift. You have been showing off in your line for the last half hour ; now do give Tawno a chance of exhibiting a little ; poor fellow, he hasn't often a chance of exhibiting, as his wife keeps him so much in sight." Not wishing to appear desirous of engrossing the public attention, and feeling rather desirous to see how Tawno, of whose exploits in leaping horses I had frequently heard, would acquit himself in the affair, I at length dismounted, and Tawno, at a bound, leaped into the saddle, where he really looked like Gunnar of Hlitharend, save and except that the complexion of Gunnar was

florid, whereas that of Tawno was of nearly Mulatto darkness; and that all Tawno's features were cast in the Grecian model, whereas Gunnar had a snub nose. "There 's a leaping-bar behind the house," said the landlord. "Leaping-bar!" said Mr. Petulengro, scornfully. "Do you think my black pal ever rides at a leaping-bar? No more than at a windle-straw. Leap over that meadow wall, Tawno." Just past the house, in the direction in which I had been trotting, was a wall about four feet high, beyond which was a small meadow. Tawno rode the horse gently up to the wall, permitted him to look over, then backed him for about ten yards, and pressing his calves against the horse's sides, he loosed the rein, and the horse launching forward, took the leap in gallant style. "Well done, man and horse!" said Mr. Petulengro, "now come back, Tawno." The leap from the side of the meadow was, however, somewhat higher; and the horse, when pushed at it, at first turned away; whereupon Tawno backed him to a greater distance. pushed the horse to a full gallop, giving a wild cry; whereupon the horse again took the wall, slightly grazing one of his legs against it. "A near thing," said the landlord, "but a good leap. Now, no more leaping, so long as I have control

over the animal." The horse was then led back to the stable; and the landlord, myself, and companions going into the bar, I paid down the money for the horse.

Scarcely was the bargain concluded, when two or three of the company began to envy me the possession of the horse, and forcing their way into the bar, with much noise and clamour, said that the horse had been sold too cheap. One fellow, in particular, with a red waistcoat, the son of a wealthy farmer, said that if he had but known that the horse had been so good a one, he would have bought it at the first price asked for it, which he was now willing to pay, that is to-morrow, supposing—"supposing your father will let you have the money," said the landlord, "which, after all, might not be the case; but, however that may be, it is too late now. I think myself the horse has been sold for too little money, but if so all the better for the young man, who came forward when no other body did with his money in his hand. There, take yourselves out of my bar, said he to the fellows; "and a pretty scoundrel you," said he to the man of the red waistcoat, "to say the horse has been sold too cheap, why, it was only yesterday you said he was good for nothing, and

were passing all kinds of jokes at him. Take yourself out of my bar, I say, you and all of you," and he turned the fellows out. I then asked the landlord whether he would permit the horse to remain in the stable for a short time, provided I paid for his entertainment; and on his willingly consenting, I treated my friends with ale, and then returned with them to the encampment.

That evening I informed Mr. Petulengro and his party that on the morrow I intended to mount my horse, and leave that part of the country in quest of adventures; inquiring of Jasper where, in the event of my selling the horse advantageously, I might meet with him, and repay the money I had borrowed of him; whereupon Mr. Petulengro informed me that in about ten weeks I might find him at a certain place at the Chong gav. I then stated that as I could not well carry with me the property which I possessed in the dingle, which after all was of no considerable value, I had resolved to bestow the said property, namely, the pony, tent, tinker-tools, &c., on Ursula and her husband, partly because they were poor, and partly on account of the great kindness which I bore to Ursula, from whom I had, on various

occasions, experienced all manner of civility, particularly in regard to crabbed words. On hearing this intelligence, Ursula returned many thanks to her gentle brother as she called me, and Sylvester was so overjoyed that, casting aside his usual phlegm, he said I was the best friend he had ever had in the world, and in testimony of his gratitude swore that he would permit me to give his wife a choomer in the presence of the whole company, which offer, however, met with a very mortifying reception; the company frowning disapprobation, Ursula protesting against anything of the kind, and I myself showing no forwardness to avail myself of it, having inherited from nature a considerable fund of modesty, to which was added no slight store acquired in the course of my Irish education. I passed that night alone in the dingle in a very melancholy manner, with little or no sleep, thinking of Isopel Berners; and in the morning when I quitted it I shed several tears, as I reflected that I should probably never again see the spot where I had passed so many hours in her company.

CHAPTER XX.

FAREWELL TO THE ROMANS.—THE LANDLORD AND HIS NIECE.—SET OUT AS A TRAVELLER.

On reaching the plain above, I found my Romany friends breakfasting, and on being asked by Mr. Petulengro to join them, I accepted the invitation. No sooner was breakfast over than I informed Ursula and her husband that they would find the property, which I had promised them, below in the dingle, commending the little pony Ambrol to their best care. I took leave of the whole company, which was itself about to break up camp and to depart in the direction of London, and made the best of my way to the public-house. I had a small bundle in my hand, and was dressed in the same manner as when I departed from London, having left my waggoner's slop with the other effects in the dingle. On arriving at the public-house, I informed the landlord that I was come for my horse, inquiring, at the same time, whether he

could not accommodate me with a bridle and saddle. He told me that the bridle and saddle, with which I had ridden the horse on the preceding day, were at my service for a trifle; that he had received them some time since in payment for a debt, and that he had himself no use for them. The leathers of the bridle were rather shabby, and the bit rusty, and the saddle was old-fashioned; but I was happy to purchase them for seven shillings, more especially as the landlord added a small valise, which he said could be strapped to the saddle, and which I should find very convenient for carrying my things in. I then proceeded to the stable, told the horse we were bound on an expedition, and giving him a feed of corn, left him to discuss it, and returned to the bar-room to have a little farewell chat with the landlord, and at the same time to drink with him a farewell glass of ale. Whilst we were talking and drinking, the niece came and joined us: she was a decent, sensible, young woman, who appeared to take a great interest in her uncle, whom she regarded with a singular mixture of pride and disapprobation—pride for the renown which he had acquired by his feats of old, and disapprobation for his late imprudences. She said

that she hoped that his misfortunes would be a warning to him to turn more to his God than he had hitherto done, and to give up cock-fighting and other low-life practices. To which the landlord replied, that with respect to cock-fighting he intended to give it up entirely, being determined no longer to risk his capital upon birds, and with respect to his religious duties he should attend the church of which he was churchwarden at least once a quarter, adding, however, that he did not intend to become either canter or driveller, neither of which characters would befit a publican surrounded by such customers as he was, and that to the last day of his life he hoped to be able to make use of his fists. After a stay of about two hours I settled accounts; and having bridled and saddled my horse, and strapped on the valise, I mounted, shook hands with the landlord and his niece, and departed, notwithstanding that they both entreated me to tarry until the evening, it being then the heat of the day.

CHAPTER XXI.

AN ADVENTURE ON THE ROADS.—THE SIX FLINT STONES.—A RURAL SCENE.—MEAD.—THE OLD MAN AND HIS BEES.

I BENT my course in the direction of the north, more induced by chance than any particular motive; all quarters of the world having about equal attractions for me. I was in high spirits at finding myself once more on horseback, and trotted gaily on, until the heat of the weather induced me to slacken my pace, more out of pity for my horse than because I felt any particular inconvenience from it—heat and cold being then, and still, matters of great indifference to me. What I thought of I scarcely know, save and except that I have a glimmering recollection that I felt some desire to meet with one of those adventures, which upon the roads of England are generally as plentiful as blackberrries in autumn; and Fortune, who has generally been ready to gratify my inclinations, provided it cost her very little by so doing, was not slow in furnishing me

with an adventure, perhaps as characteristic of the English roads as anything which could have happened.

I might have travelled about six miles, amongst cross-roads and lanes, when suddenly I found myself upon a broad and very dusty road, which seemed to lead due north. As I wended along this, I saw a man upon a donkey, riding towards me. The man was commonly dressed, with a broad felt hat on his head, and a kind of satchel on his back; he seemed to be in a mighty hurry, and was every now and then belabouring the donkey with a cudgel. The donkey, however, which was a fine large creature of the silver-grey species, did not appear to sympathize at all with its rider in his desire to get on, but kept its head turned back as much as possible, moving from one side of the road to the other, and not making much forward way. As I passed, being naturally of a very polite disposition, I gave the man the sele of the day, asking him, at the same time, why he beat the donkey; whereupon the fellow, eyeing me askance, told me to mind my own business, with the addition of something which I need not repeat. I had not proceeded a furlong before I saw seated on the dust by the wayside,

close by a heap of stones, and with several flints before him, a respectable-looking old man, with a straw hat and a white smock, who was weeping bitterly.

"What are you crying for, father?" said I. "Have you come to any hurt?" "Hurt enough," sobbed the old man, "I have been just tricked out of the best ass in England by a villain, who gave me nothing but these trash in return," pointing to the stones before him. "I really scarcely understand you," said I, "I wish you would explain yourself more clearly." "I was riding on my ass from market," said the old man, "when I met here a fellow with a sack on his back, who, after staring at the ass and me a moment or two, asked me if I would sell her. I told him that I could not think of selling her, as she was very useful to me, and though an animal, my true companion, whom I loved as much as if she were my wife and daughter. I then attempted to pass on, but the fellow stood before me, begging me to sell her, saying that he would give me anything for her; well, seeing that he persisted, I said at last that if I sold her, I must have six pounds for her, and I said so to get rid of him, for I saw that he was a shabby fellow, who had probably not six shillings in the world;

but I had better have held my tongue," said the old man, crying more bitterly than before, "for the words were scarcely out of my mouth, when he said he would give me what I asked, and taking the sack from his back, he pulled out a steelyard, and going to the heap of stones there, he took up several of them and weighed them, then flinging them down before me, he said, 'There are six pounds, neighbour; now, get off the ass, and hand her over to me.' Well, I sat like one dumbfoundered for a time, till at last I asked him what he meant? 'What do I mean,' said he, 'you old rascal, why, I mean to claim my purchase,' and then he swore so awfully, that scarcely knowing what I did I got down, and he jumped on the animal and rode off as fast as he could." "I suppose he was the fellow," said I, "whom I just now met upon a fine grey ass, which he was beating with a cudgel." "I dare say he was," said the old man, "I saw him beating her as he rode away, and I thought I should have died." "I never heard such a story," said I; "well, do you mean to submit to such a piece of roguery quietly?" "Oh, dear," said the old man, "what can I do? I am seventy-nine years of age; I am bad on my feet, and dar'n't go after him." "Shall I go?" said

I; "the fellow is a thief, and any one has a right to stop him." "Oh, if you could but bring her again to me," said the old man, "I would bless you to my dying day; but have a care; I don't know but after all the law may say that she is his lawful purchase. I asked six pounds for her, and he gave me six pounds." "Six flints you mean," said I; "no, no, the law is not quite so bad as that either; I know something about her, and am sure that she will never sanction such a quibble. At all events, I 'll ride after the fellow." Thereupon turning the horse round, I put him to his very best trot; I rode nearly a mile without obtaining a glimpse of the fellow, and was becoming apprehensive that he had escaped me by turning down some by-path, two or three of which I had passed. Suddenly, however, on the road making a slight turning, I perceived him right before me, moving at a tolerably swift pace, having by this time probably overcome the resistance of the animal. Putting my horse to a full gallop, I shouted at the top of my voice, "Get off that donkey, you rascal, and give her up to me, or I 'll ride you down." The fellow hearing the thunder of the horse's hoofs behind him, drew up on one side of the road. "What do you want?" said he, as I

stopped my charger, now almost covered with sweat and foam, close beside him. "Do you want to rob me?" "To rob you?" said I. "No! but to take from you that ass, of which you have just robbed its owner." "I have robbed no man," said the fellow; "I just now purchased it fairly of its master, and the law will give it to me; he asked six pounds for it, and I gave him six pounds." "Six stones, you mean, you rascal, said I; "get down, or my horse shall be upon you in a moment;" then with a motion of my reins, I caused the horse to rear, pressing his sides with my heels as if I intended to make him leap. "Stop," said the man, "I 'll get down, and then try if I can't serve you out." He then got down, and confronted me with his cudgel; he was a horrible-looking fellow, and seemed prepared for anything. Scarcely, however, had he dismounted, when the donkey jerked the bridle out of his hand, and probably in revenge for the usage she had received, gave him a pair of tremendous kicks on the hip with her hinder legs, which overturned him, and then scampered down the road the way she had come. "Pretty treatment this," said the fellow, getting up without his cudgel, and holding his hand to his side, "I wish I may not be lamed for life."

"And if you be," said I, "it would merely serve you right, you rascal, for trying to cheat a poor old man out of his property by quibbling at words." "Rascal!" said the fellow, "you lie, I am no rascal; and as for quibbling with words —suppose I did! What then? All the first people does it! The newspapers does it! The gentlefolks that calls themselves the guides of the popular mind does it! I 'm no ignoramus. I reads the newspapers, and knows what 's what." "You read them to some purpose," said I. "Well, if you are lamed for life, and unfitted for any active line — turn newspaper editor; I should say you are perfectly qualified, and this day's adventure may be the foundation of your fortune," thereupon I turned round and rode off. The fellow followed me with a torrent of abuse. "Confound you," said he—yet that was not the expression either—"I know you; you are one of the horse-patrol, come down into the country on leave to see your relations. Confound you, you and the like of you have knocked my business on the head near Lunnon, and I suppose we shall have you shortly in the country." "To the newspaper office," said I, "and fabricate falsehoods out of flint stones;" then touching the horse with my heels, I trotted off, and coming to

the place where I had seen the old man, I found him there, risen from the ground, and embracing his ass.

I told him that I was travelling down the road, and said, that if his way lay in the same direction as mine, he could do no better than accompany me for some distance, lest the fellow, who, for aught I knew, might be hovering nigh, might catch him alone, and again get his ass from him. After thanking me for my offer, which he said he would accept, he got upon his ass, and we proceeded together down the road. My new acquaintance said very little of his own accord; and when I asked him a question, answered rather incoherently. I heard him every now and then say, "Villain!" to himself, after which he would pat the donkey's neck, from which circumstance I concluded that his mind was occupied with his late adventure. After travelling about two miles, we reached a place where a drift-way on the right led from the great road; here my companion stopped, and on my asking him whether he was going any farther, he told me that the path to the right was the way to his home.

I was bidding him farewell, when he hemmed once or twice, and said, that as he did not live

far off, he hoped that I would go with him and taste some of his mead. As I had never tasted mead, of which I had frequently read in the compositions of the Welsh bards, and, moreover, felt rather thirsty from the heat of the day, I told him that I should have great pleasure in attending him. Whereupon, turning off together, we proceeded about half a mile, sometimes between stone walls, and at other times hedges, till we reached a small hamlet, through which we passed, and presently came to a very pretty cottage, delightfully situated within a garden, surrounded by a hedge of woodbines. Opening a gate at one corner of the garden, he led the way to a large shed, which stood partly behind the cottage, which he said was his stable; thereupon he dismounted and led his donkey into the shed, which was without stalls, but had a long rack and manger. On one side he tied his donkey, after taking off her caparisons, and I followed his example, tying my horse at the other side with a rope halter which he gave me; he then asked me to come in and taste his mead, but I told him that I must attend to the comfort of my horse first, and forthwith, taking a wisp of straw, rubbed him carefully down. Then taking a pailful of clear water which stood in the shed,

I allowed the horse to drink about half a pint; and then turning to the old man, who all the time had stood by looking at my proceedings, I asked him whether he had any oats? "I have all kinds of grain," he replied; and, going out, he presently returned with two measures, one a large and the other a small one, both filled with oats, mixed with a few beans, and handing the large one to me for the horse, he emptied the other before the donkey, who, before she began to despatch it, turned her nose to her master's face, and fairly kissed him. Having given my horse his portion, I told the old man that I was ready to taste his mead as soon as he pleased, whereupon he ushered me into his cottage, where, making me sit down by a deal table in a neatly-sanded kitchen, he produced from an old-fashioned closet a bottle, holding about a quart, and a couple of cups, which might each contain about half a pint, then opening the bottle and filling the cups with a brown-coloured liquor, he handed one to me, and taking a seat opposite to me, he lifted the other, nodded, and saying to me—"Health and welcome," placed it to his lips and drank.

"Health and thanks," I replied; and being very thirsty, emptied my cup at a draught; I had

scarcely done so, however, when I half repented. The mead was deliciously sweet and mellow, but appeared strong as brandy; my eyes reeled in my head, and my brain became slightly dizzy. "Mead is a strong drink," said the old man, as he looked at me, with a half smile on his countenance. "This is, at any rate," said I, "so strong, indeed, that I would not drink another cup for any consideration." "And I would not ask you," said the old man; "for, if you did, you would most probably be stupid all day, and wake next morning with a headache. Mead is a good drink, but woundily strong, especially to those who be not used to it, as I suppose you are not." "Where do you get it?" said I. "I make it myself," said the old man, "from the honey which my bees make." "Have you many bees?" I inquired. "A great many," said the old man. "And do you keep them," said I, "for the sake of making mead with their honey?" "I keep them," he replied, "partly because I am fond of them, and partly for what they bring me in; they make me a great deal of honey, some of which I sell, and with a little I make me some mead to warm my poor heart with, or occasionally to treat a friend with like yourself." "And do you support yourself

entirely by means of your bees?" "No," said the old man; "I have a little bit of ground behind my house, which is my principal means of support." "And do you live alone?" "Yes," said he; "with the exception of the bees and the donkey, I live quite alone." "And have you always lived alone?" The old man emptied his cup, and his heart being warmed with the mead, he told me his history, which was simplicity itself. His father was a small yeoman, who, at his death, had left him, his only child, the cottage, with a small piece of ground behind it, and on this little property he had lived ever since. About the age of twenty-five he had married an industrious young woman, by whom he had one daughter, who died before reaching years of womanhood. His wife, however, had survived her daughter many years, and had been a great comfort to him, assisting him in his rural occupations; but, about four years before the present period, he had lost her, since which time he had lived alone, making himself as comfortable as he could; cultivating his ground, with the help of a lad from the neighbouring village, attending to his bees, and occasionally riding his donkey to market, and hearing the word of God, which he said he was sorry he could not read,

twice a week regularly at the parish church. Such was the old man's tale.

When he had finished speaking, he led me behind his house, and showed me his little domain. It consisted of about two acres in admirable cultivation ; a small portion of it formed a kitchen garden, whilst the rest was sown with four kinds of grain, wheat, barley, pease, and beans. The air was full of ambrosial sweets, resembling those proceeding from an orange grove ; a place, which though I had never seen at that time, I since have. In the garden was the habitation of the bees, a long box, supported upon three oaken stumps. It was full of small round glass windows, and appeared to be divided into a great many compartments, much resembling drawers placed sideways. He told me that, as one compartment was filled, the bees left it for another ; so that, whenever he wanted honey, he could procure some without injuring the insects. Through the little round windows I could see several of the bees at work ; hundreds were going in and out of the doors ; hundreds were buzzing about on the flowers, the woodbines, and beans. As I looked around on the well-cultivated field, the garden, and the bees, I thought I had never before seen so rural and peaceful a scene.

When we returned to the cottage we again sat down, and I asked the old man whether he was not afraid to live alone. He told me that he was not, for that, upon the whole, his neighbours were very kind to him. I mentioned the fellow who had swindled him of his donkey upon the road. "That was no neighbour of mine," said the old man, "and, perhaps, I shall never see him again, or his like." "It 's a dreadful thing," said I, "to have no other resource, when injured, than to shed tears on the road." "It is so," said the old man; "but God saw the tears of the old, and sent a helper." "Why did you not help yourself?" said I. "Instead of getting off your ass, why did you not punch at the fellow, or at any rate use dreadful language, call him villain, and shout robbery?" "Punch!" said the old man, "shout! what, with these hands, and this voice—Lord, how you run on! I am old, young chap, I am old!" "Well," said I, "it is a shameful thing to cry even when old." "You think so now," said the old man, "because you are young and strong; perhaps, when you are as old as I, you will not be ashamed to cry."

Upon the whole I was rather pleased with the old man, and much with all about him. As evening drew nigh, I told him that I must pro-

ceed on my journey ; whereupon he invited me to tarry with him during the night, telling me that he had a nice room and bed above at my service. I, however, declined ; and bidding him farewell, mounted my horse, and departed. Regaining the road, I proceeded once more in the direction of the north ; and, after a few hours, coming to a comfortable public-house, I stopped and put up for the night.

CHAPTER XXII.

THE SINGULAR NOISE.—SLEEPING IN A MEADOW.—THE BOOK.—CURE FOR WAKEFULNESS.—LITERARY TEA PARTY.—POOR BYRON.

I DID not awake till rather late the next morning; and when I did, I felt considerable drowsiness, with a slight headache, which I was uncharitable enough to attribute to the mead which I had drank on the preceding day. After feeding my horse, and breakfasting, I proceeded on my wanderings. Nothing occurred worthy of relating till mid-day was considerably past, when I came to a pleasant valley, between two gentle hills. I had dismounted, in order to ease my horse, and was leading him along by the bridle, when, on my right, behind a bank in which some umbrageous ashes were growing, I heard a singular noise. I stopped short and listened, and presently said to myself, "Surely this is snoring, perhaps that of a hedgehog." On further consideration, however, I was convinced that the noise which I heard, and which

certainly seemed to be snoring, could not possibly proceed from the nostrils of so small an animal, but must rather come from those of a giant, so loud and sonorous was it. About two or three yards farther was a gate, partly open, to which I went, and peeping into the field, saw a man lying on some rich grass, under the shade of one of the ashes; he was snoring away at a great rate. Impelled by curiosity, I fastened the bridle of my horse to the gate, and went up to the man. He was a genteelly-dressed individual; rather corpulent, with dark features, and seemingly about forty-five. He lay on his back, his hat slightly over his brow, and at his right hand lay an open book. So strenuously did he snore that the wind from his nostrils agitated, perceptibly, a fine cambric frill which he wore at his bosom. I gazed upon him for some time, expecting that he might awake; but he did not, but kept on snoring, his breast heaving convulsively. At last, the noise he made became so terrible, that I felt alarmed for his safety, imagining that a fit might seize him, and he lose his life whilst asleep. I therefore exclaimed, "Sir, sir, awake! you sleep overmuch." But my voice failed to rouse him, and he continued snoring as before; whereupon I touched him

slightly with my riding wand, but failing to wake him, I touched him again more vigorously; whereupon he opened his eyes, and, probably imagining himself in a dream, closed them again. But I was determined to arouse him, and cried as loud as I could, "Sir, sir, pray sleep no more!" He heard what I said, opened his eyes again, stared at me with a look of some consciousness, and, half raising himself upon his elbows, asked me what was the matter. "I beg your pardon," said I, "but I took the liberty of awaking you, because you appeared to be much disturbed in your sleep—I was fearful, too, that you might catch a fever from sleeping under a tree." "I run no risk," said the man, "I often come and sleep here; and as for being disturbed in my sleep, I felt very comfortable; I wish you had not awoken me." "Well," said I, "I beg your pardon once more. I assure you that what I did was with the best intention." "Oh! pray make no farther apology," said the individual, "I make no doubt that what you did was done kindly; but there 's an old proverb, to the effect, 'that you should let sleeping dogs lie,' he added, with a smile. Then, getting up, and stretching himself with a yawn, he took up his book and said, "I have slept quite long enough,

and it 's quite time for me to be going home." "Excuse my curiosity," said I, "if I inquire what may induce you to come and sleep in this meadow?" "To tell you the truth," answered he, "I am a bad sleeper." "Pray pardon me," said I, "if I tell you that I never saw one sleep more heartily." "If I did so," said the individual, "I am beholden to this meadow and this book; but I am talking riddles, and will explain myself. I am the owner of a very pretty property, of which this valley forms part. Some years ago, however, up started a person who said the property was his; a lawsuit ensued, and I was on the brink of losing my all, when, most unexpectedly, the suit was determined in my favour. Owing, however, to the anxiety to which my mind had been subjected for years, my nerves had become terribly shaken; and no sooner was the trial terminated than sleep forsook my pillow. I sometimes passed nights without closing an eye; I took opiates, but they rather increased than alleviated my malady. About three weeks ago a friend of mine put this book into my hand, and advised me to take it every day to some pleasant part of my estate, and try and read a page or two, assuring me, if I did, that I should infallibly fall asleep. I

took his advice, and selecting this place, which I considered the pleasantest part of my property, I came, and lying down, commenced reading the book, and before finishing a page was in a dead slumber. Every day since then I have repeated the experiment, and every time with equal success. I am a single man, without any children: and yesterday I made my will, in which, in the event of my friend's surviving me, I have left him all my fortune, in gratitude for his having procured for me the most invaluable of all blessings—sleep."

"Dear me," said I, "how very extraordinary! Do you think that your going to sleep is caused by the meadow or the book?" "I suppose by both," said my new acquaintance, "acting in co-operation." "It may be so," said I; "the magic influence does certainly not proceed from the meadow alone; for since I have been here, I have not felt the slightest inclination to sleep. Does the book consist of prose or poetry?" "It consists of poetry," said the individual." "Not Byron's?" said I. "Byron's!" repeated the individual, with a smile of contempt; "no, no: there is nothing narcotic in Byron's poetry. I don't like it. I used to read it, but it thrilled, agitated, and kept me awake. No, this is not

Byron's poetry, but the inimitable . . . .'s—mentioning a name which I had never heard till then. "Will you permit me to look at it?" said I. "With pleasure," he answered, politely handing me the book. I took the volume, and glanced over the contents. It was written in blank verse, and appeared to abound in descriptions of scenery; there was much mention of mountains, valleys, streams, and waterfalls, harebells and daffodils. These descriptions were interspersed with dialogues, which, though they proceeded from the mouths of pedlars and rustics, were of the most edifying description; mostly on subjects moral or metaphysical, and couched in the most gentlemanly and unexceptionable language, without the slightest mixture of vulgarity, coarseness, or pie-bald grammar. Such appeared to me to be the contents of the book; but before I could form a very clear idea of them, I found myself nodding, and a surprising desire to sleep coming over me. Rousing myself, however, by a strong effort, I closed the book, and, returning it to the owner, inquired of him, "Whether he had any motive in coming and lying down in the meadow, besides the wish of enjoying sleep?" "None whatever," he replied; indeed, I should be very glad not to be compelled

to do so, always provided I could enjoy the blessing of sleep; for by lying down under trees, I may possibly catch the rheumatism, or be stung by serpents; and, moreover, in the rainy season and winter the thing will be impossible, unless I erect a tent, which will possibly destroy the charm." "Well," said I, "you need give yourself no farther trouble about coming here, as I am fully convinced that with this book in your hand, you may go to sleep anywhere, as your friend was doubtless aware, though he wished to interest your imagination for a time by persuading you to lie abroad; therefore, in future, whenever you feel disposed to sleep, try to read the book, and you will be sound asleep in a minute; the narcotic influence lies in the book, and not in the field." "I will follow your advice," said the individual; "and this very night take it with me to bed; though I hope in time to be able to sleep without it, my nerves being already much quieted from the slumbers I have enjoyed in this field." He then moved towards the gate, where we parted; he going one way, and I and my horse the other.

More than twenty years subsequent to this period, after much wandering about the world, returning to my native country, I was invited to

a literary tea-party, where, the discourse turning upon poetry, I, in order to show that I was not more ignorant than my neighbours, began to talk about Byron, for whose writings I really entertained a considerable admiration, though I had no particular esteem for the man himself. At first I received no answer to what I said—the company merely surveying me with a kind of sleepy stare. At length a lady, about the age of forty, with a large wart on her face, observed, in a drawling tone, "That she had not read Byron—at least since her girlhood—and then only a few passages; but that the impression on her mind was, that his writings were of a highly objectionable character." "I also read a little of him in my boyhood," said a gentleman, about sixty, but who evidently, from his dress and demeanour, wished to appear about thirty, but I highly disapproved of him; for, notwithstanding he was a nobleman, he is frequently very coarse, and very fond of raising emotion. Now emotion is what I dislike;" drawling out the last syllable of the word dislike. "There is only one poet for me—the divine . . . ."—and then he mentioned a name which I had only once heard, and afterwards quite forgotten; the name mentioned by the snorer in the field. "Ah! there is no one

like him!" murmured some more of the company; "the poet of nature—of nature without its vulgarity." I wished very much to ask these people whether they were ever bad sleepers, and whether they had read the poet, so called, from a desire of being set to sleep. Within a few days, however, I learnt that it had of late become very fashionable and genteel to appear half asleep, and that one could exhibit no better mark of superfine breeding than by occasionally in company setting one's ronchal organ in action. I then ceased to wonder at the popularity, which I found nearly universal, of . . . .'s poetry; for, certainly in order to make one's self appear sleepy in company, or occasionally to induce sleep, nothing could be more efficacious than a slight pre-lection of his poems. So, poor Byron, with his fire and emotion—to say nothing of his mouthings and coxcombry—was dethroned, as I had prophesied he would be more than twenty years before, on the day of his funeral, though I had little idea that his humiliation would have been brought about by one, whose sole strength consists in setting people to sleep. Well, all things are doomed to terminate in sleep. Before that termination, however, I will venture to prophesy that people will become a little more awake—

snoring and yawning be a little less in fashion—and poor Byron be once more reinstated on his throne, though his rival will always stand a good chance of being worshipped by those whose ruined nerves are insensible to the narcotic powers of opium and morphine.

CHAPTER XXIII.

DRIVERS AND FRONT OUTSIDE PASSENGERS.—FATIGUE OF BODY AND MIND.—UNEXPECTED GREETING.—MY INN.—THE GOVERNOR.—ENGAGEMENT.

I CONTINUED my journey, passing through one or two villages. The day was exceedingly hot, and the roads dusty. In order to cause my horse as little fatigue as possible, and not to chafe his back, I led him by the bridle, my doing which brought upon me a shower of remarks, jests, and would-be witticisms from the drivers and front outside passengers of sundry stage-coaches, which passed me in one direction or the other. In this way I proceeded till considerably past noon, when I felt myself very fatigued, and my horse appeared no less so; and it is probable that the lazy and listless manner in which we were moving on, tired us both much more effectually than hurrying along at a swift trot would have done, for I have observed that when the energies of the body are not exerted a languor frequently comes over it. At length, arriving at a very large building with an arch-

way, near the entrance of a town, I sat down on what appeared to be a stepping-block, and presently experienced a great depression of spirits. I began to ask myself whither I was going, and what I should do with myself and the horse which I held by the bridle? It appeared to me that I was alone in the world with the poor animal, who looked for support to me, who knew not how to support myself. Then the image of Isopel Berners came into my mind, and when I bethought me how I had lost her for ever, and how happy I might have been with her in the New World had she not deserted me, I became yet more miserable.

As I sat in this state of mind, I suddenly felt some one clap me on the shoulder, and heard a voice say, "Ha! comrade of the dingle, what chance has brought you into these parts?" I turned round, and beheld a man in the dress of a postillion, whom I instantly recognised as he to whom I had rendered assistance on the night of the storm.

"Ah!" said I, "is it you? I am glad to see you, for I was feeling very lonely and melancholy."

"Lonely and melancholy," he replied, "how is that? how can any one be lonely and melan-

choly with such a noble horse as that you hold by the bridle?"

"The horse," said I, "is one cause of my melancholy, for I know not in the world what to do with it."

"Is it your own?"

"Yes," said I, "I may call it my own, though I borrowed the money to purchase it."

"Well, why don't you sell it?"

"It is not always easy to find a purchaser for a horse like this," said I; "can you recommend me one?"

"I? Why, no, not exactly; but you'll find a purchaser shortly—pooh! if you have no other cause for disquiet than that horse, cheer up, man, don't be cast down. Have you nothing else on your mind? By-the-by, what's become of the young woman you were keeping company with in that queer lodging-place of yours?"

"She has left me," said I.

"You quarrelled, I suppose?"

"No," said I, "we did not exactly quarrel, but we are parted."

"Well," replied he, "but you will soon come together again."

"No," said I, "we are parted for ever."

"For ever! Pooh! you little know how

people sometimes come together again who think they are parted for ever. Here 's something on that point relating to myself. You remember, when I told you my story in that dingle of yours, that I mentioned a young woman, my fellow-servant when I lived with the English family in Mumo Jumbo's town, and how she and I, when our foolish governors were thinking of changing their religion, agreed to stand by each other, and be true to old Church of England, and to give our governors warning, provided they tried to make us renegades. Well, she and I parted soon after that, and never thought to meet again, yet we met the other day in the fields, for she lately came to live with a great family not far from here, and we have since agreed to marry, to take a little farm, for we have both a trifle of money, and live together till 'death us do part.' So much for parting for ever! But what do I mean by keeping you broiling in the sun with your horse's bridle in your hand, and you on my own ground? Do you know where you are? Why, that great house is my inn, that is, it 's my master's, the best fellow in . . . . Come along, you and your horse both will find a welcome at my inn.

Thereupon he led the way into a large court in which there were coaches, chaises, and a great many people ; taking my horse from me, he led it into a nice cool stall, and fastened it to the rack—he then conducted me into a postillion's keeping-room, which at that time chanced to be empty, and he then fetched a pot of beer and sat down by me.

After a little conversation he asked me what I intended to do, and I told him frankly that, I did not know ; whereupon he observed that, provided I had no objection, he had little doubt that I could be accommodated for some time at his inn. "Our upper ostler," said he, "died about a week ago ; he was a clever fellow, and, besides his trade, understood reading and accounts."

"Dear me," said I, interrupting him, "I am not fitted for the place of ostler—moreover, I refused the place of ostler at a public-house, which was offered to me only a few days ago." The postillion burst into a laugh. "Ostler at a public-house, indeed ! why, you would not compare a berth at a place like that with the situation of ostler at my inn, the first road-house in England ! However, I was not thinking of the place of ostler for you ; you are, as you say, not fitted for it, at any rate not at a house like this. We

have, moreover, the best under-ostler in all England—old Bill, with the drawback that he is rather fond of drink. We could make shift with him very well, provided we could fall in with a man of writing and figures, who could give an account of the hay and corn which comes in and goes out, and wouldn't object to give a look occasionally at the yard. Now it appears to me that you are just such a kind of man, and if you will allow me to speak to the governor, I don't doubt that he will gladly take you, as he feels kindly disposed towards you from what he has heard me say concerning you."

"And what should I do with my horse?" said I.

"The horse need give you no uneasiness," said the postillion, "I know he will be welcome here both for bed and manger, and, perhaps, in a little time you may find a purchaser, as a vast number of sporting people frequent this house." I offered two or three more objections, which the postillion overcame with great force of argument, and the pot being nearly empty, he drained it to the bottom drop, and then starting up, left me alone.

In about twenty minutes he returned, accompanied by a highly intelligent looking individual

dressed in blue and black, with a particularly white cravat, and without a hat on his head; this individual, whom I should have mistaken for a gentleman but for the intelligence depicted in his face, he introduced to me as the master of the inn. The master of the inn shook me warmly by the hand, told me that he was happy to see me in his house, and thanked me in the handsomest terms for the kindness I had shown to his servant in the affair of the thunder-storm. Then saying that he was informed I was out of employ, he assured me that he should be most happy to engage me to keep his hay and corn account, and as general superintendent of the yard, and that with respect to the horse, which he was told I had, he begged to inform me that I was perfectly at liberty to keep it at the inn upon the very best, until I could find a purchaser,—that with regard to wages—but he had no sooner mentioned wages than I cut him short, saying, that provided I stayed I should be most happy to serve him for bed and board, and requested that he would allow me until the next morning to consider of his offer; he willingly consented to my request, and, begging that I would call for anything I pleased, left me alone with the postillion.

I passed that night until about ten o'clock with the postillion, when he left me, having to drive a family about ten miles across the country ; before his departure, however, I told him that I had determined to accept the offer of his governor, as he called him. At the bottom of my heart I was most happy that an offer had been made, which secured to myself and the animal a comfortable retreat at a moment when I knew not whither in the world to take myself and him.

CHAPTER XXIV.

AN INN OF TIMES GONE BY.—A FIRST-RATE PUBLICAN.—HAY AND CORN.—OLD-FASHIONED OSTLER.—HIGHWAYMEN.—MOUNTED POLICE.—GROOMING.

THE inn, of which I had become an inhabitant, was a place of infinite life and bustle. Travellers of all descriptions, from all the cardinal points, were continually stopping at it; and to attend to their wants, and minister to their convenience, an army of servants, of one description or other, was kept; waiters, chambermaids, grooms, postillions, shoe-blacks, cooks, scullions, and what not, for there was a barber and hair-dresser, who had been at Paris, and talked French with a cockney accent; the French sounding all the better, as no accent is so melodious as the cockney. Jacks creaked in the kitchens turning round spits, on which large joints of meat piped and smoked before the great big fires. There was running up and down stairs, and along galleries, slamming of doors, cries of "Coming, sir," and "Please to step this way, ma'am," during eighteen hours of the

four-and-twenty. Truly a very great place for life and bustle was this inn. And often in after life, when lonely and melancholy, I have called up the time I spent there, and never failed to become cheerful from the recollection.

I found the master of the house a very kind and civil person. Before being an inn-keeper he had been in some other line of business, but, on the death of the former proprietor of the inn had married his widow, who was still alive, but, being somewhat infirm, lived in a retired part of the house. I have said that he was kind and civil; he was, however, not one of those people who suffer themselves to be made fools of by anybody; he knew his customers, and had a calm clear eye, which would look through a man without seeming to do so. The accommodation of his house was of the very best description; his wines were good, his viands equally so, and his charges not immoderate; though he very properly took care of himself. He was no vulgar inn-keeper, had a host of friends, and deserved them all. During the time I lived with him, he was presented, by a large assemblage of his friends and customers, with a dinner at his own house, which was very costly, and at which the best of wines were sported, and after the dinner with a

piece of plate, estimated at fifty guineas. He received the plate, made a neat speech of thanks, and when the bill was called for, made another neat speech, in which he refused to receive one farthing for the entertainment, ordering in at the same time two dozen more of the best champagne, and sitting down amidst uproarious applause, and cries of "You shall be no loser by it!" Nothing very wonderful in such conduct, some people will say; I don't say there is, nor have I any intention to endeavour to persuade the reader that the landlord was a Carlo Borromeo; he merely gave a quid pro quo; but it is not every person who will give you a quid pro quo. Had he been a vulgar publican, he would have sent in a swinging bill after receiving the plate; "but then no vulgar publican would have been presented with plate;" perhaps not, but many a vulgar public character has been presented with plate, whose admirers never received a quid pro quo, except in the shape of a swinging bill.

I found my duties of distributing hay and corn, and keeping an account thereof, anything but disagreeable, particularly after I had acquired the good-will of the old ostler, who at first looked upon me with rather an evil eye, considering me somewhat in the light of one who

had usurped an office which belonged to himself by the right of succession; but there was little gall in the old fellow, and, by speaking kindly to him, never giving myself any airs of assumption; but, above all, by frequently reading the newspapers to him—for, though passionately fond of news and politics, he was unable to read—I soon succeeded in placing myself on excellent terms with him. A regular character was that old ostler; he was a Yorkshireman by birth, but had seen a great deal of life in the vicinity of London, to which, on the death of his parents, who were very poor people, he went at a very early age. Amongst other places where he had served as ostler was a small inn at Hounslow, much frequented by highwaymen, whose exploits he was fond of narrating, especially those of Jerry Abershaw, who, he said, was a capital rider; and on hearing his accounts of that worthy I half regretted that the old fellow had not been in London, and I had not formed his acquaintance about the time I was thinking of writing the life of the said Abershaw, not doubting that with his assistance I could have produced a book at least as remarkable as the life and adventures of that entirely imaginary personage, Joseph Sell; perhaps, however, I was mistaken; and whenever

Abershaw's life shall appear before the public—and my publisher credibly informs me that it has not yet appeared—I beg and entreat the public to state which it likes best, the life of Abershaw, or that of Sell, for which latter work I am informed that during the last few months there has been a prodigious demand. My old friend, however, after talking of Abershaw, would frequently add, that, good rider as Abershaw certainly was, he was decidedly inferior to Richard Ferguson, generally called Galloping Dick, who was a pal of Abershaw's, and had enjoyed a career as long, and nearly as remarkable, as his own. I learned from him that both were capital customers at the Hounslow inn, and that he had frequently drank with them in the corn-room. He said that no man could desire more jolly or entertaining companions over a glass of "summut;" but that upon the road it was anything but desirable to meet them; there they were terrible, cursing and swearing, and thrusting the muzzles of their pistols into people's mouths; and at this part of his locution the old man winked, and said, in a somewhat lower voice, that upon the whole they were right in doing so, and that when a person had once made up his mind to become a highwayman, his best policy was to go

the whole hog, fearing nothing, but making every body afraid of him ; that people never thought of resisting a savage-faced, foul-mouthed highwayman, and if he were taken, were afraid to bear witness against him, lest he should get off and cut their throats some time or other upon the roads ; whereas people would resist being robbed by a sneaking, pale-visaged rascal, and would swear bodily against him on the first opportunity, —adding, that Abershaw and Ferguson, two most awful fellows, had enjoyed a long career, whereas two disbanded officers of the army, who wished to rob a coach like gentlemen, had begged the passengers' pardon, and talked of hard necessity, had been set upon by the passengers themselves, amongst whom were three women, pulled from their horses, conducted to Maidstone, and hanged with as little pity as such contemptible fellows deserved. "There is nothing like going the whole hog," he repeated, "and if ever I had been a highwayman, I would have done so ; I should have thought myself all the more safe ; and, moreover, shouldn't have despised myself. To curry favour with those you are robbing, sometimes at the expense of your own comrades, as I have known fellows do, why it is the greatest . . . ."

"So it is," interposed my friend the postillion.

who chanced to be present at a considerable part of the old ostler's discourse; "it is, as you say, the greatest of humbug, and merely, after all, gets a fellow into trouble; but no regular bred highwayman would do it. I say, George, catch the Pope of Rome trying to curry favour with anybody he robs; catch old Mumbo Jumbo currying favour with the Archbishop of Canterbury and the Dean and Chapter, should he meet them in a stage-coach; it would be with him, Bricconi Abbasso, as he knocked their teeth out with the butt of his trombone; and the old regular-built ruffian would be all the safer for it, as Bill would say, as ten to one the Archbishop and Chapter, after such a spice of his quality, would be afraid to swear against him, and to hang him, even if he were in their power, though that would be the proper way; for, if it is the greatest of all humbug for a highwayman to curry favour with those he robs, the next greatest is to try to curry favour with a highwayman when you have got him, by letting him off."

Finding the old man so well acquainted with the history of highwaymen, and taking considerable interest in the subject, having myself edited a book containing the lives of

many remarkable people who had figured on the highway, I forthwith asked him how it was that the trade of highwayman had become extinct in England, as at present we never heard of any one following it. Whereupon he told me that many causes had contributed to bring about that result; the principal of which were the following:—the refusal to license houses which were known to afford shelter to highwaymen, which, amongst many others, had caused the inn at Hounslow to be closed; the inclosure of many a wild heath in the country, on which they were in the habit of lurking, and particularly the establishing in the neighbourhood of London of a well-armed mounted patrol, who rode the highwaymen down, and delivered them up to justice, which hanged them without ceremony.

"And that would be the way to deal with Mumbo Jumbo and his gang," said the postillion, "should they show their visages in these realms? and I hear by the newspapers that they are becoming every day more desperate. Take away the license from their public-houses, cut down the rookeries and shadowy old avenues in which they are fond of lying in wait, in order to sally out upon people as they pass in the roads;

but, above all, establish a good mounted police to ride after the ruffians and drag them by the scruff of the neck to the next clink, where they might lie till they could be properly dealt with by law; instead of which, the Government are repealing the wise old laws enacted against such characters, giving fresh licences every day to their public-houses, and saying that it would be a pity to cut down their rookeries and thickets, because they look so very picturesque; and, in fact, giving them all kind of encouragement; why, if such behaviour is not enough to drive an honest man mad, I know not what is. It is of no use talking, I only wish the power were in my hands, and if I did not make short work of them, might I be a mere jackass postillion all the remainder of my life."

Besides acquiring from the ancient ostler a great deal of curious information respecting the ways and habits of the heroes of the road, with whom he had come in contact in the early portion of his life, I picked up from him many excellent hints relating to the art of grooming horses. Whilst at the inn, I frequently groomed the stage and post-horses, and those driven up by travellers in their gigs: I was not compelled, nor indeed expected, to do so; but I took plea-

sure in the occupation; and I remember at that period one of the principal objects of my ambition was to be a first-rate groom, and to make the skins of the creatures I took in hand look sleek and glossy like those of moles. I have said that I derived valuable hints from the old man, and, indeed, became a very tolerable groom, but there was a certain finishing touch which I could never learn from him, though he possessed it himself, and which I could never attain to by my own endeavours; though my want of success certainly did not proceed from want of application, for I have rubbed the horses down, purring and buzzing all the time, after the genuine ostler fashion, until the perspiration fell in heavy drops upon my shoes, and when I had done my best, and asked the old fellow what he thought of my work, I could never extract from him more than a kind of grunt, which might be translated, "Not so very bad, but I have seen a horse groomed much better," which leads me to suppose that a person, in order to be a first-rate groom, must have something in him when he is born which I had not, and, indeed, which many other people have not who pretend to be grooms. What does the reader think?

CHAPTER XXV.

STABLE HARTSHORN.—HOW TO MANAGE A HORSE ON A JOURNEY.—YOUR BEST FRIEND.

Of one thing I am certain, that the reader must be much delighted with the wholesome smell of the stable, with which many of these pages are redolent; what a contrast to the sickly odours exhaled from those of some of my contemporaries, especially of those who pretend to be of the highly fashionable class, and who treat of reception-rooms, well may they be styled so, in which dukes, duchesses, earls, countesses, archbishops, bishops, mayors, mayoresses—not forgetting the writers themselves, both male and female—congregate and press upon one another; how cheering, how refreshing, after having been nearly knocked down with such an atmosphere, to come in contact with genuine stable hartshorn. Oh! the reader shall have yet more of the stable, and of that old ostler, for which he or she will doubtless exclaim, "Much obliged!"—

and lest I should forget to perform my promise, the reader shall have it now.

I shall never forget an harangue from the mouth of the old man, which I listened to one warm evening as he and I sat on the threshold of the stable, after having attended to some of the wants of a batch of coach-horses. It related to the manner in which a gentleman should take care of his horse and self, whilst engaged in a journey on horseback, and was addressed to myself, on the supposition of my one day coming to an estate, and of course becoming a gentleman.

"When you are a gentleman," said he, "should you ever wish to take a journey on a horse of your own, and you could not have a much better than the one you have here eating its fill in the box yonder—I wonder by the by, how you ever came by it—you can't do better than follow the advice I am about to give you, both with respect to your animal and yourself. Before you start, merely give your horse a couple of handfuls of corn and a little water, somewhat under a quart, and if you drink a pint of water yourself out of the pail, you will feel all the better during the whole day; then you may walk and trot your animal for about

ten miles, till you come to some nice inn, where you may get down and see your horse led into a nice stall, telling the ostler not to feed him till you come. If the ostler happens to be a dog-fancier, and has an English terrier dog like that of mine there, say what a nice dog it is, and praise its black and tawn; and if he does not happen to be a dog-fancier, ask him how he 's getting on, and whether he ever knew worse times; that kind of thing will please the ostler, and he will let you do just what you please with your own horse, and when your back is turned, he 'll say to his comrades what a nice gentleman you are, and how he thinks he has seen you before; then go and sit down to breakfast, and before you have finished breakfast, get up and go and give your horse a feed of corn; chat with the ostler two or three minutes till your horse has taken the shine out of his corn, which will prevent the ostler taking any of it away when your back is turned, for such things are sometimes done—not that I ever did such a thing myself when I was at the inn at Hounslow. Oh, dear me, no! Then go and finish your breakfast, and when you have finished your breakfast and called for the newspaper, go and water your horse, letting him

have about one pailful, then give him another feed of corn, and enter into discourse with the ostler about bull-baiting, the prime minister, and the like; and when your horse has once more taken the shine out of his corn, go back to your room and your newspaper—and I hope for your sake it may be the "Globe," for that 's the best paper going—then pull the bell-rope and order in your bill, which you will pay without counting it up—supposing you to be a gentleman. Give the waiter sixpence, and order out your horse, and when your horse is out, pay for the corn, and give the ostler a shilling, then mount your horse and walk him gently for five miles; and whilst you are walking him in this manner, it may be as well to tell you to take care that you do not let him down and smash his knees, more especially if the road be a particularly good one, for it is not at a desperate hiverman pace, and over very bad roads, that a horse tumbles and smashes his knees, but on your particularly nice road, when the horse is going gently and lazily, and is half asleep, like the gemman on his back; well, at the end of the five miles, when the horse has digested his food, and is all right, you may begin to push your horse on, trotting him a mile at a heat, and then walking him a quarter of a one, that his

wind may be not distressed; and you may go on in that manner for thirty miles, never galloping of course, for none but fools or hivermen ever gallop horses on roads; and at the end of that distance you may stop at some other nice inn for dinner. I say, when your horse is led into the stable, after that same thirty miles trotting and walking, don't let the saddle be whisked off at once, for if you do your horse will have such a sore back as will frighten you, but let your saddle remain on your horse's back, with the girths loosened, till after his next feed of corn, and be sure that he has no corn, much less water, till after a long hour and more; after he is fed he may be watered to the tune of half a pail, and then the ostler can give him a regular rub down; you may then sit down to dinner, and when you have dined get up and see to your horse as you did after breakfast, in fact you must do much after the same fashion you did at t'other inn; see to your horse, and by no means disoblige the ostler. So when you have seen to your horse a second time, you will sit down to your bottle of wine—supposing you to be a gentleman—and after you have finished it, and your argument about the corn-laws with any commercial gentleman who happens to be in the room, you may

mount your horse again—not forgetting to do the proper thing to the waiter and ostler; you may mount your horse again and ride him, as you did before, for about five and twenty miles, at the end of which you may put up for the night after a very fair day's journey, for no gentleman—supposing he weighs sixteen stone, as I suppose you will by the time you become a gentleman—ought to ride a horse more than sixty-five miles in one day, provided he has any regard for his horse's back, or his own either. See to your horse at night, and have him well rubbed down. The next day you may ride your horse forty miles just as you please, but never foolishly, and those forty miles will bring you to your journey's end, unless your journey be a plaguy long one, and if so, never ride your horse more than five and thirty miles a day, always, however, seeing him well fed, and taking more care of him than yourself; which is but right and reasonable, seeing as how the horse is the best animal of the two.

"When you are a gentleman," said he, after a pause, "the first thing you must think about is to provide yourself with a good horse for your own particular riding; you will, perhaps, keep a coach and pair, but they will be less your own than your lady's, should you have one, and your

young gentry, should you have any; or, if you have neither, for madam, your housekeeper, and the upper female servants; so you need trouble your head less about them, though, of course, you would not like to pay away your money for screws; but be sure you get a good horse for your own riding; and that you may have a good chance of having a good one, buy one that's young and has plenty of belly—a little more than the one has which you now have, though you are not yet a gentleman; you will, of course, look to his head, his withers, legs and other points, but never buy a horse at any price that has not plenty of belly, no horse that has not belly is ever a good feeder, and a horse that a'n't a good feeder can't be a good horse; never buy a horse that is drawn up in the belly behind, a horse of that description can't feed, and can never carry sixteen stone.

"So when you have got such a horse be proud of it—as I dare say you are of the one you have now—and wherever you go swear there a'n't another to match it in the country, and if anybody gives you the lie, take him by the nose and tweak it off, just as you would do if anybody were to speak ill of your lady, or, for want of her, of your housekeeper. Take care of your horse,

as you would of the apple of your eye—I am sure I would, if I were a gentleman, which I don't ever expect to be, and hardly wish, seeing as how I am sixty-nine, and am rather too old to ride—yes, cherish and take care of your horse as perhaps the best friend you have in the world; for, after all, who will carry you through thick and thin as your horse will? not your gentlemen friends I warrant, nor your housekeeper, nor your upper servants, male or female; perhaps your lady would, that is, if she is a wopper, and one of the right sort; the others would be more likely to take up mud and pelt you with it, provided they saw you in trouble, than to help you. So take care of your horse, and feed him every day with your own hands; give him three quarters of a peck of corn each day, mixed up with a little hay-chaff, and allow him besides one hundred weight of hay in the course of the week; some say that the hay should be hardland hay, because it is wholesomest, but I say, let it be clover hay, because the horse likes it best; give him through summer and winter, once a week, a pailful of bran mash, cold in summer and in winter hot; ride him gently about the neighbourhood every day, by which means you will give exercise to yourself and horse, and, moreover, have the satisfaction of

exhibiting yourself and your horse to advantage. and hearing, perhaps, the men say what a fine horse, and the ladies saying what a fine man: never let your groom mount your horse, as it is ten to one, if you do, your groom will be wishing to show off before company, and will fling your horse down. I was groom to a gentman before I went to the inn at Hounslow, and flung him a horse down worth ninety guineas, by endeavouring to show off before some ladies that I met on the road. Turn your horse out to grass throughout May and the first part of June, for then the grass is sweetest, and the flies don't sting so bad as they do later in summer; afterwards merely turn him out occasionally in the swale of the morn and the evening; after September the grass is good for little, lash and sour at best; every horse should go out to grass, if not his blood becomes full of greasy humours, and his wind is apt to become affected, but he ought to be kept as much as possible from the heat and flies, always got up at night, and never turned out late in the year—Lord! if I had always such a nice attentive person to listen to me as you are, I could go on talking about 'orses to the end of time."

CHAPTER XXVI.

THE STAGE-COACHMEN OF ENGLAND. — A BULLY SERVED OUT. — BROUGHTON'S GUARD.—THE BRAZEN HEAD.

I LIVED on very good terms, not only with the master and the old ostler, but with all the domestics and hangers-on at the inn; waiters, chambermaids, cooks, and scullions, not forgetting the "boots," of which there were three. As for the postillions, I was sworn brother with them all, and some of them went so far as to swear that I was the best fellow in the world; for which high opinion entertained by them of me, I believe I was principally indebted to the good account their comrade gave of me, whom I had so hospitably received in the dingle. I repeat that I lived on good terms with all the people connected with the inn, and was noticed and spoken kindly to by some of the guests—especially by that class termed commercial travellers—all of whom were great friends and patronizers of the landlord, and were the principal promoters of the dinner, and

subscribers to the gift of plate, which I have already spoken of, the whole fraternity striking me as the jolliest set of fellows imaginable, the best customers to an inn, and the most liberal to servants; there was one description of persons, however, frequenting the inn, which I did not like at all, and which I did not get on well with, and these people were the stage-coachmen.

The stage-coachmen of England, at the time of which I am speaking, considered themselves mighty fine gentry, nay, I verily believe the most important personages of the realm, and their entertaining this high opinion of themselves can scarcely be wondered at; they were low fellows, but masters of driving; driving was in fashion, and sprigs of nobility used to dress as coachmen and imitate the slang and behaviour of coachmen, from whom occasionally they would take lessons in driving as they sat beside them on the box, which post of honour any sprig of nobility who happened to take a place on a coach claimed as his unquestionable right; and then these sprigs would smoke cigars and drink sherry with the coachmen in bar-rooms, and on the road; and, when bidding them farewell, would give them a guinea or a half-guinea, and shake them by the hand, so that these fellows, being low fellows, very

naturally thought no small liquor of themselves, but would talk familiarly of their friends lords so and so, the honourable misters so and so, and Sir Harry and Sir Charles, and be wonderfully saucy to any one who was not a lord, or something of the kind; and this high opinion of themselves received daily augmentation from the servile homage paid them by the generality of the untitled male passengers, especially those on the fore part of the coach, who used to contend for the honour of sitting on the box with the coachman when no sprig was nigh to put in his claim. Oh! what servile homage these craven creatures did pay these same coach fellows, more especially after witnessing this or t' other act of brutality practised upon the weak and unoffending—upon some poor friendless woman travelling with but little money, and perhaps a brace of hungry children with her, or upon some thin and half-starved man travelling on the hind part of the coach from London to Liverpool with only eighteen pence in his pocket after his fare was paid, to defray his expenses on the road; for as the insolence of these knights was vast, so was their rapacity enormous; they had been so long accustomed to have crowns and half-crowns rained upon them by their admirers and flatterers, that they would look at a

shilling, for which many an honest labourer was happy to toil for ten hours under a broiling sun, with the utmost contempt; would blow upon it derisively, or fillip it into the air before they pocketed it; but when nothing was given them, as would occasionally happen—for how could they receive from those who had nothing? and nobody was bound to give them anything, as they had certain wages from their employers—then what a scene would ensue! Truly the brutality and rapacious insolence of English coachmen had reached a climax; it was time that these fellows should be disenchanted, and the time—thank Heaven!—was not far distant. Let the craven dastards who used to curry favour with them, and applaud their brutality, lament their loss now that they and their vehicles have disappeared from the roads; I, who have ever been an enemy to insolence, cruelty, and tyranny, loathe their memory, and, what is more, am not afraid to say so, well aware of the storm of vituperation, partly learnt from them, which I may expect from those who used to fall down and worship them.

Amongst the coachmen who frequented the inn was one who was called "the bang-up coachman." He drove to our inn, in the forepart of every day, one of what were called the fast coaches, and after-

wards took back the corresponding vehicle. He stayed at our house about twenty minutes, during which time the passengers of the coach which he was to return with dined ; those at least who were inclined for dinner, and could pay for it. He derived his sobriquet of "The bang-up coachman" partly from his being dressed in the extremity of coach dandyism, and partly from the peculiar insolence of his manner, and the unmerciful fashion in which he was in the habit of lashing on the poor horses committed to his charge. He was a large tall fellow, of about thirty, with a face which, had it not been bloated by excess, and insolence and cruelty stamped most visibly upon it, might have been called good-looking. His insolence indeed was so great, that he was hated by all the minor fry connected with coaches along the road upon which he drove, especially the ostlers, whom he was continually abusing or finding fault with. Many was the hearty curse which he received when his back was turned ; but the generality of people were much afraid of him, for he was a swinging strong fellow, and had the reputation of being a fighter, and in one or two instances had beaten in a barbarous manner individuals who had quarrelled with him.

I was nearly having a fracas with this worthy.

One day, after he had been drinking sherry with a sprig, he swaggered into the yard where I happened to be standing; just then a waiter came by carrying upon a tray part of a splendid Cheshire cheese, with a knife, plate, and napkin. Stopping the waiter, the coachman cut with the knife a tolerably large lump out of the very middle of the cheese, stuck it on the end of the knife, and putting it to his mouth nibbled a slight piece off it, and then, tossing the rest away with disdain, flung the knife down upon the tray, motioning the waiter to proceed; "I wish," said I, "you may not want before you die what you have just flung away," whereupon the fellow turned furiously towards me; just then, however, his coach being standing at the door, there was a cry for coachman, so that he was forced to depart, contenting himself for the present with shaking his fist at me, and threatening to serve me out on the first opportunity; before, however, the opportunity occurred he himself got served out in a most unexpected manner.

The day after this incident he drove his coach to the inn, and after having dismounted and received the contributions of the generality of the passengers, he strutted up, with a cigar in his mouth, to an individual who had come with

him, and who had just asked me a question with respect to the direction of a village about three miles off, to which he was going. "Remember the coachman," said the knight of the box to this individual, who was a thin person of about sixty, with a white hat, rather shabby black coat, and buff-coloured trowsers, and who held an umbrella and a small bundle in his hand. "If you expect me to give you anything," said he to the coachman, "you are mistaken; I will give you nothing. You have been very insolent to me as I rode behind you on the coach, and have encouraged two or three trumpery follows, who rode along with you, to cut scurvy jokes at my expense, and now you come to me for money; I am not so poor, but I could have given you a shilling had you been civil, as it is, I will give you nothing." "Oh! you won't, won't you?" said the coachman; "dear me! I hope I shan't starve because you won't give me anything—a shilling! why, I could afford to give you twenty if I thought fit, you pauper! civil to you, indeed! things are come to a fine pass if I need be civil to you! Do you know who you are speaking to? why, the best lords in the country are proud to speak to me. Why, it was only the other day that

the Marquis of . . . . said to me . . . ." and then he went on to say what the Marquis said to him ; after which, flinging down his cigar, he strutted up the road, swearing to himself about paupers.

"You say it is three miles to . . . .," said the individual to me ; "I think I shall light my pipe, and smoke it as I go along." Thereupon he took out from a side-pocket a tobacco-box and short meerschaum pipe, and implements for striking a light, filled his pipe, lighted it, and commenced smoking. Presently the coachman drew near, I saw at once that there was mischief in his eye ; the man smoking was standing with his back towards him, and he came so nigh to him, seemingly purposely, that as he passed a puff of smoke came of necessity against his face. "What do you mean by smoking in my face?" said he, striking the pipe of the elderly individual out of his mouth. The other, without manifesting much surprise, said, "I thank you ; and if you will wait a minute, I will give you a receipt for that favour ;" then gathering up his pipe, and taking off his coat and hat, he laid them on a stepping-block which stood near, and rubbing his hands together, he advanced towards the coachman in an attitude

of offence, holding his hands crossed very near to his face. The coachman, who probably expected anything but such a movement from a person of the age and appearance of the individual whom he had insulted, stood for a moment motionless with surprise; but, recollecting himself, he pointed at him derisively with his finger; the next moment, however, the other was close upon him, had struck aside the extended hand with his left fist, and given him a severe blow on the nose with his right, which he immediately followed by a left-hand blow in the eye; then drawing his body slightly backward, with the velocity of lightning he struck the coachman full in the mouth, and the last blow was the severest of all, for it cut the coachman's lips nearly through; blows so quickly and sharply dealt I had never seen. The coachman reeled like a fir-tree in a gale, and seemed nearly unsensed. "Ho! what's this? a fight! a fight!" sounded from a dozen voices, and people came running from all directions to see what was going on. The coachman, coming somewhat to himself, disencumbered himself of his coat and hat; and, encouraged by two or three of his brothers of the whip, showed some symptoms of fighting, endeavouring to close with

his foe, but the attempt was vain, his foe was not to be closed with; he did not shift or dodge about, but warded off the blows of his opponent with the greatest sang-froid, always using the guard which I have already described, and putting in, in return, short chopping blows with the swiftness of lightning. In a very few minutes the countenance of the coachman was literally cut to pieces, and several of his teeth were dislodged; at length he gave in; stung with mortification, however, he repented, and asked for another round; it was granted, to his own complete demolition. The coachman did not drive his coach back that day, he did not appear on the box again for a week; but he never held up his head afterwards. Before I quitted the inn, he had disappeared from the road, going no one knew where.

The coachman, as I have said before, was very much disliked upon the road, but there was an esprit de corps amongst the coachmen, and those who stood by did not like to see their brother chastised in such tremendous fashion. "I never saw such a fight before," said one. "Fight! why, I don't call it a fight at all, this chap here ha'n't got a scratch, whereas Tom is cut to pieces; it is all along of that guard of

his; if Tom could have got within his guard he would have soon served the old chap out." "So he would," said another, "it was all owing to that guard. However, I think I see into it, and if I had not to drive this afternoon, I would have a turn with the old fellow and soon serve him out." "I will fight him now for a guinea," said the other coachman, half taking off his coat; observing, however, that the elderly individual made a motion towards him, he hitched it upon his shoulder again, and added, "that is, if he had not been fighting already, but as it is, I am above taking an advantage, especially of such a poor old creature as that." And when he had said this, he looked around him, and there was a feeble titter of approbation from two or three of the craven crew, who were in the habit of currying favour with the coachmen. The elderly individual looked for a moment at these last, and then said, "To such fellows as you I have nothing to say;" then turning to the coachmen, "and as for you," he said, "ye cowardly bullies, I have but one word, which is, that your reign upon the roads is nearly over, and that a time is coming when ye will be no longer wanted or employed in your present capacity, when ye will either have to drive dung-carts,

assist as ostlers at village ale-houses, or rot in the workhouse." Then putting on his coat and hat, and taking up his bundle, not forgetting his meerschaum, and the rest of his smoking apparatus, he departed on his way. Filled with curiosity, I followed him.

"I am quite astonished that you should be able to use your hands in the way you have done," said I, as I walked with this individual in the direction in which he was bound.

"I will tell you how I became able to do so," said the elderly individual, proceeding to fill and light his pipe as he walked along. "My father was a journeyman engraver, who lived in a very riotous neighbourhood in the outskirts of London. Wishing to give me something of an education, he sent me to a day-school, two or three streets distant from where we lived, and there, being rather a puny boy, I suffered much persecution from my school-fellows, who were a very blackguard set. One day, as I was running home, with one of my tormentors pursuing me, old Sergeant Broughton, the retired fighting-man, seized me by the arm . . . ."

"Dear me," said I; "has it ever been your luck to be acquainted with Sergeant Broughton?"

"You may well call it luck," said the elderly individual; "but for him I should never have been able to make my way through the world. He lived only four doors from our house; so, as I was running along the street, with my tyrant behind me, Sergeant Broughton seized me by the arm. 'Stop, my boy,' said he; 'I have frequently seen that scamp ill-treating you; now I will teach you how to send him home with a bloody nose; down with your bag of books; and now, my game chick,' whispered he to me, placing himself between me and my adversary, so that he could not observe his motions; 'clench your fist in this manner, and hold your arms in this, and when he strikes at you, move them as I now show you, and he can't hurt you; now, don't be afraid, but go at him.' I confess that I was somewhat afraid, but I considered myself in some degree under the protection of the famous Sergeant, and, clenching my fist, I went at my foe, using the guard which my ally recommended. The result corresponded to a certain degree with the predictions of the Sergeant; I gave my foe a bloody nose and a black eye, though, notwithstanding my recent lesson in the art of self-defence, he contrived to give me two or three clumsy blows.

From that moment I was the especial favourite of the Sergeant, who gave me farther lessons, so that in a little time I became a very fair boxer, beating everybody of my own size who attacked me. The old gentleman, however, made me promise never to be quarrelsome, nor to turn his instructions to account, except in self-defence. I have always borne in mind my promise, and have made it a point of conscience never to fight unless absolutely compelled. Folks may rail against boxing if they please, but being able to box may sometimes stand a quiet man in good stead. How should I have fared to-day, but for the instructions of Sergeant Broughton? But for them, the brutal ruffian who insulted me must have passed unpunished. He will not soon forget the lesson which I have just given him —the only lesson he could understand. What would have been the use of reasoning with a fellow of that description? Brave old Broughton! I owe him much."

"And your manner of fighting," said I, "was the manner employed by Sergeant Broughton?"

"Yes," said my new acquaintance; "it was the manner in which he beat every one who attempted to contend with him, till, in an evil

hour, he entered the ring with Slack, without any training or preparation, and by a chance blow lost the battle to a man who had been beaten with ease by those who, in the hands of Broughton, appeared like so many children. It was the way of fighting of him who first taught Englishmen to box scientifically, who was the head and father of the fighters of what is now called the old school, the last of which were Johnson and Big Ben."

"A wonderful man that Big Ben," said I.

"He was so," said the elderly individual; "but had it not been for Broughton, I question whether Ben would have ever been the fighter he was. Oh! there is no one like old Broughton; but for him I should at the present moment be sneaking along the road, pursued by the hissings and hootings of the dirty flatterers of that blackguard coachman."

"What did you mean," said I, "by those words of yours, that the coachmen would speedily disappear from the roads?"

"I meant," said he, "that a new method of travelling is about to be established, which will supersede the old. I am a poor engraver, as my father was before me; but engraving is an intellectual trade, and by following it, I have

been brought in contact with some of the cleverest men in England. It has even made me acquainted with the projector of the scheme, which he has told me many of the wisest heads of England have been dreaming of during a period of six hundred years, and which it seems was alluded to by a certain Brazen Head in the story-book of Friar Bacon, who is generally supposed to have been a wizard, but in reality was a great philosopher. Young man, in less than twenty years, by which time I shall be dead and gone, England will be surrounded with roads of metal, on which armies may travel with mighty velocity, and of which the walls of brass and iron by which the friar proposed to defend his native land are types." He then, shaking me by the hand, proceeded on his way, whilst I returned to the inn.

CHAPTER XXVII.

FRANCIS ARDRY.—HIS MISFORTUNES.—DOG AND LION FIGHT.—GREAT MEN OF THE WORLD.

A FEW days after the circumstance which I have last commemorated, it chanced that, as I was standing at the door of the inn, one of the numerous stage-coaches which were in the habit of stopping there, drove up, and several passengers got down. I had assisted a woman with a couple of children to dismount, and had just delivered to her a band-box, which appeared to be her only property, which she had begged me to fetch down from the roof, when I felt a hand laid upon my shoulder, and heard a voice exclaim, "Is it possible, old fellow, that I find you in this place? I turned round, and wrapped in a large blue cloak, I beheld my good friend Francis Ardry. I shook him most warmly by the hand, and said, "If you are surprised to see me, I am no less so to see you, where are you bound to?"

"I am bound for L . . . . ; at any rate I am

booked for that sea-port," said my friend in reply.

"I am sorry for it," said I, "for in that case we shall have to part in a quarter of an hour, the coach by which you came stopping no longer."

"And whither are you bound?" demanded my friend.

"I am stopping at present in this house, quite undetermined as to what to do."

"Then come along with me," said Francis Ardry.

"That I can scarcely do," said I, "I have a horse in the stall which I cannot afford to ruin by racing to L . . . . by the side of your coach."

My friend mused for a moment: "I have no particular business at L . . . .," said he; "I was merely going thither to pass a day or two, till an affair, in which I am deeply interested, at C . . . . shall come off. I think I shall stay with you for four-and-twenty hours at least; I have been rather melancholy of late, and cannot afford to part with a friend like you at the present moment; it is an unexpected piece of good fortune to have met you; and I have not been very fortunate of late," he added, sighing.

"Well," said I, "I am glad to see you once

more, whether fortunate or not; where is your baggage?"

"Yon trunk is mine," said Francis, pointing to a trunk of black Russian leather upon the coach.

"We will soon have it down," said I, and at a word which I gave to one of the hangers-on of the inn, the trunk was taken from the top of the coach. "Now," said I to Francis Ardry, "follow me, I am a person of some authority in this house;" thereupon I led Francis Ardry into the house, and a word which I said to a waiter forthwith installed Francis Ardry in a comfortable private sitting-room, and his trunk in the very best sleeping-room of our extensive establishment.

It was now about one o'clock: Francis Ardry ordered dinner for two, to be ready at four, and a pint of sherry to be brought forthwith, which I requested my friend the waiter might be the very best, and which in effect turned out as I requested; we sat down, and when we had drank to each other's health, Frank requested me to make known to him how I had contrived to free myself from my embarrassments in London, what I had been about since I quitted that city, and the present posture of my affairs.

I related to Francis Ardry how I had com-

posed the Life of Joseph Sell, and how the sale of it to the bookseller had enabled me to quit London with money in my pocket, which had supported me during a long course of ramble in the country, into the particulars of which I, however, did not enter with any considerable degree of fullness. I summed up my account by saying that "I was at present a kind of overlooker in the stables of the inn, had still some pounds in my purse, and, moreover, a capital horse in the stall."

"No very agreeable posture of affairs," said Francis Ardry, looking rather seriously at me.

"I make no complaints," said I, "my prospects are not very bright, it is true, but sometimes I have visions, both waking and sleeping, which, though always strange, are invariably agreeable. Last night, in my chamber near the hayloft, I dreamt that I had passed over an almost interminable wilderness—an enormous wall rose before me, the wall, methought, was the great wall of China:—strange figures appeared to be beckoning to me from the top of the wall; such visions are not exactly to be sneered at. Not that such phantasmagoria," said I, raising my voice, "are to be compared for a moment with such desirable things as fashion, fine clothes,

cheques from uncles, parliamentary interest, the love of splendid females. Ah! woman's love," said I, and sighed.

"What's the matter with the fellow?" said Francis Ardry.

"There is nothing like it," said I.

"Like what?"

"Love, divine love," said I.

"Confound love," said Francis Ardry, "I hate the very name; I have made myself a pretty fool by it, but trust me for ever being caught at such folly again. In an evil hour I abandoned my former pursuits and amusements for it; in one morning spent at Joey's there was more real pleasure than in . . . ."

"Surely," said I, "you are not hankering after dog-fighting again, a sport which none but the gross and unrefined care anything for? No, one's thoughts should be occupied by something higher and more rational than dog-fighting; and what better than love—divine love? Oh, there's nothing like it!"

"Pray, don't talk nonsense," said Francis Ardry.

"Nonsense," said I; "why I was repeating, to the best of my recollection, what I heard you say on a former occasion."

"If ever I talked such stuff," said Francis

Ardry, "I was a fool; and indeed I cannot deny that I have been one: no, there is no denying that I have been a fool. What do you think? that false Annette has cruelly abandoned me."

"Well," said I, "perhaps you have yourself to thank for her having done so; did you never treat her with coldness, and repay her marks of affectionate interest with strange fits of eccentric humour?"

"Lord! how little you know of women," said Francis Ardry; "had I done as you suppose, I should probably have possessed her at the present moment. I treated her in a manner diametrically opposite to that. I loaded her with presents, was always most assiduous to her, always at her feet, as I may say, yet she nevertheless abandoned me —and for whom? I am almost ashamed to say —for a fiddler."

I took a glass of wine, Francis Ardry followed my example, and then proceeded to detail to me the treatment which he had experienced from Annette, and from what he said, it appeared that her conduct to him had been in the highest degree reprehensible; notwithstanding he had indulged her in everything, she was never civil to him, but loaded him continually with taunts and insults, and had finally, on his being unable to supply her with a sum of money which she had

demanded, decamped from the lodgings which he had taken for her, carrying with her all the presents which at various times he had bestowed upon her, and had put herself under the protection of a gentleman who played the bassoon at the Italian Opera, at which place it appeared that her sister had lately been engaged as a danseuse. My friend informed me that at first he had experienced great agony at the ingratitude of Annette, but at last had made up his mind to forget her, and in order more effectually to do so, had left London with the intention of witnessing a fight, which was shortly coming off at a town in these parts, between some dogs and a lion; which combat, he informed me, had for some time past been looked forward to with intense eagerness by the gentlemen of the sporting world.

I commended him for his resolution, at the same time advising him not to give up his mind entirely to dog-fighting, as he had formerly done, but, when the present combat should be over, to return to his rhetorical studies, and above all to marry some rich and handsome lady on the first opportunity, as, with his person and expectations, he had only to sue for the hand of the daughter of a marquis to be successful, telling him, with a sigh, that all women were not Annettes, and that

upon the whole there was nothing like them. To which advice he answered, that he intended to return to rhetoric as soon as the lion fight should be over, but that he never intended to marry, having had enough of women; adding, that he was glad he had no sister, as, with the feelings which he entertained with respect to her sex, he should be unable to treat her with common affection, and concluded by repeating a proverb which he had learnt from an Arab whom he had met at Venice, to the effect, that, "one who has been stung by a snake, shivers at the sight of a string."

After a little more conversation, we strolled to the stable, where my horse was standing; my friend, who was a connoisseur in horse-flesh, surveyed the animal with attention, and after inquiring where and how I had obtained him, asked what I intended to do with him; on my telling him that I was undetermined, and that I was afraid the horse was likely to prove a burden to me, he said, "it is a noble animal, and if you mind what you are about, you may make a small fortune by him. I do not want such an animal myself, nor do I know any one who does; but a great horse-fair will be held shortly at a place where, it is true, I have never been, but of which I have heard a great deal

from my acquaintances, where it is said a first-rate horse is always sure to fetch its value; that place is Horncastle, in Lincolnshire; you should take him thither."

Francis Ardry and myself dined together, and after dinner partook of a bottle of the best port which the inn afforded. After a few glasses, we had a great deal of conversation; I again brought the subject of marriage and love, divine love, upon the carpet, but Francis almost immediately begged me to drop it; and on my having the delicacy to comply, he reverted to dog-fighting, on which he talked well and learnedly; amongst other things, he said that it was a princely sport of great antiquity, and quoted from Quintus Curtius to prove that the princes of India must have been of the fancy, they having, according to that author, treated Alexander to a fight between certain dogs and a lion. Becoming, notwithstanding my friend's eloquence and learning, somewhat tired of the subject, I began to talk about Alexander. Francis Ardry said he was one of the two great men whom the world has produced, the other being Napoleon; I replied that I believed Tamerlane was a greater man than either; but Francis Ardry knew nothing of Tamerlane, save

what he had gathered from the play of Timour the Tartar. "No," said he; "Alexander and Napoleon are the great men of the world, their names are known everywhere. Alexander has been dead upwards of two thousand years, but the very English bumpkins sometimes christen their boys by the name of Alexander—can there be a greater evidence of his greatness? As for Napoleon, there are some parts of India in which his bust is worshipped." Wishing to make up a triumvirate, I mentioned the name of Wellington, to which Francis Ardry merely said, "bah!" and resumed the subject of dog-fighting.

Francis Ardry remained at the inn during that day and the next, and then departed to the dog and lion fight; I never saw him afterwards, and merely heard of him once after a lapse of some years, and what I then heard was not exactly what I could have wished to hear. He did not make much of the advantages which he possessed, a pity, for how great were those advantages,—person, intellect, eloquence, connection, riches! yet, with all these advantages, one thing highly needful seems to have been wanting in Francis. A desire, a craving, to perform something great and good. Oh! what a vast deal may be done with intellect, courage, riches, ac-

companied by the desire of doing something great and good! Why, a person may carry the blessings of civilization and religion to barbarous, yet at the same time beautiful and romantic lands; and what a triumph there is for him who does so! what a crown of glory! of far greater value than those surrounding the brows of your mere conquerors. Yet who has done so in these times? Not many; not three, not two, something seems to have been always wanting; there is, however, one instance, in which the various requisites have been united, and the crown, the most desirable in the world—at least which I consider to be the most desirable—achieved, and only one, that of Brooke of Borneo.

CHAPTER XXVIII.

MR. PLATITUDE AND THE MAN IN BLACK.—THE POSTILLION'S ADVENTURES.—THE LONE HOUSE.—A GOODLY ASSEMBLAGE.

It never rains, but it pours. I was destined to see at this inn more acquaintances than one. On the day of Francis Ardry's departure, shortly after he had taken leave of me, as I was standing in the corn-chamber at a kind of writing-table or desk, fastened to the wall, with a book before me, in which I was making out an account of the corn and hay lately received and distributed, my friend the postillion came running in out of breath. "Here they both are," he gasped out; "pray do come and look at them!"

"Whom do you mean?" said I.

"Why, that red-haired Jack Priest, and that idiotic parson, Platitude; they have just been set down by one of the coaches, and want a post-chaise to go across the country in; and what do you think? I am to have the driving of them. I have no time to lose, for I must get myself ready; so do come and look at them."

I hastened into the yard of the inn; two or three of the helpers of our establishment were employed in drawing forward a postchaise out of the chaise-house, which occupied one side of the yard, and which was spacious enough to contain nearly twenty of these vehicles, though it was never full, several of them being always out upon the roads, as the demand upon us for postchaises across the country was very great. "There they are," said the postillion, softly, nodding towards two individuals, in one of whom I recognized the man in black, and in the other Mr. Platitude; "there they are; have a good look at them, while I go and get ready." The man in black and Mr. Platitude were walking up and down the yard, Mr. Platitude was doing his best to make himself appear ridiculous, talking very loudly in exceedingly bad Italian, evidently for the purpose of attracting the notice of the bystanders, in which he succeeded, all the stable-boys and hangers-on about the yard, attracted by his vociferation, grinning at his ridiculous figure as he limped up and down. The man in black said little or nothing, but from the glances which he cast sideways appeared to be thoroughly ashamed of his companion; the worthy couple presently arrived close to where I was standing,

and the man in black, who was nearest to me, perceiving me, stood still as if hesitating, but recovering himself in a moment, he moved on without taking any farther notice; Mr. Platitude exclaimed as they passed, in broken lingo, "I hope we shall find the holy doctors all assembled," and as they returned, "I make no doubt that they will all be rejoiced to see me." Not wishing to be standing an idle gazer, I went to the chaise and assisted in attaching the horses, which had now been brought out, to the pole. The postillion presently arrived, and finding all ready took the reins and mounted the box, whilst I very politely opened the door for the two travellers; Mr. Platitude got in first, and, without taking any notice of me, seated himself on the farther side. In got the man in black, and seated himself nearest to me. "All is right," said I, as I shut the door, whereupon the postillion cracked his whip, and the chaise drove out of the yard. Just as I shut the door, however, and just as Mr. Platitude had recommenced talking in jergo, at the top of his voice, the man in black turned his face partly towards me, and gave me a wink with his left eye.

I did not see my friend the postillion till the next morning, when he gave me an account of

the adventures he had met with on his expedition. It appeared that he had driven the man in black and the Reverend Platitude across the country by roads and lanes which he had some difficulty in threading. At length, when he had reached a part of the country where he had never been before, the man in black pointed out to him a house near the corner of a wood, to which he informed him they were bound. The postillion said it was a strange-looking house, with a wall round it; and, upon the whole, bore something of the look of a madhouse. There was already a postchaise at the gate, from which three individuals had alighted—one of them the postillion said was a mean-looking scoundrel, with a regular petty-larceny expression in his countenance. He was dressed very much like the man in black, and the postillion said that he could almost have taken his bible oath that they were both of the same profession. The other two he said were parsons, he could swear that, though he had never seen them before; there could be no mistake about them. Church of England parsons the postillion swore they were, with their black coats, white cravats, and airs, in which clumsiness and conceit were most funnily blended—

Church of England parsons of the Platitude description, who had been in Italy, and seen the Pope, and kissed his toe, and picked up a little broken Italian, and come home greater fools than they went forth. It appeared that they were all acquaintances of Mr. Platitude, for when the postillion had alighted and let Mr. Platitude and his companion out of the chaise, Mr. Platitude shook the whole three by the hand, conversed with his two brothers in a little broken jergo, and addressed the petty-larceny looking individual by the title of Reverend Doctor. In the midst of these greetings, however, the postillion said the man in black came up to him, and proceeded to settle with him for the chaise; he had shaken hands with nobody, and had merely nodded to the others; "and now," said the postillion, "he evidently wished to get rid of me, fearing, probably, that I should see too much of the nonsense that was going on. It was whilst settling with me that he seemed to recognise me for the first time, for he stared hard at me, and at last asked whether I had not been in Italy; to which question, with a nod and a laugh, I replied that I had. I was then going to ask him about the health of the image of

Holy Mary, and to say that I hoped it had recovered from its horsewhipping; but he interrupted me, paid me the money for the fare, and gave me a crown for myself, saying he would not detain me any longer. I say, partner, I am a poor postillion, but when he gave me the crown I had a good mind to fling it in his face. I reflected, however, that it was not mere gift-money, but coin which I had earned, and hardly too, so I put it in my pocket, and I bethought me, moreover, that, knave as I knew him to be, he had always treated me with civility; so I nodded to him, and he said something which, perhaps, he meant for Latin, but which sounded very much like 'vails,' and by which he doubtless alluded to the money which he had given me. He then went into the house with the rest, the coach drove away which had brought the others, and I was about to get on the box and follow; observing, however, two more chaises driving up, I thought I would be in no hurry, so I just led my horses and chaise a little out of the way, and pretending to be occupied about the harness, I kept a tolerably sharp look-out at the new arrivals. Well, partner, the next vehicle that drove up was a gentle-

man's carriage which I knew very well, as well as those within it, who were a father and son, the father a good kind of old gentleman, and a justice of the peace, therefore not very wise, as you may suppose; the son a puppy who has been abroad, where he contrived to forget his own language, though only nine months absent, and now rules the roast over his father and mother, whose only child he is, and by whom he is thought wondrous clever. So this foreigneering chap brings his poor old father to this out of the way house to meet these Platitudes and petty-larceny villains, and perhaps would have brought his mother too, only, simple thing, by good fortune she happens to be laid up with the rheumatiz. Well, the father and son, I beg pardon I mean the son and father, got down and went in, and then after their carriage was gone, the chaise behind drove up, in which was a huge fat fellow, weighing twenty stone at least, but with something of a foreign look, and with him—who do you think? Why, a rascally Unitarian minister, that is, a fellow who had been such a minister, but who some years ago leaving his own people, who had bred him up and sent him to their college at York, went over to the High Church, and is now, I

suppose, going over to some other church, for he was talking, as he got down, wondrous fast in Latin, or what sounded something like Latin, to the fat fellow, who appeared to take things wonderfully easy, and merely grunted to the dog Latin which the scoundrel had learnt at the expense of the poor Unitarians at York. So they went into the house, and presently arrived another chaise, but ere I could make any farther observations, the porter of the out-of-the-way house came up to me, asking what I was stopping there for? bidding me go away, and not pry into other people's business. 'Pretty business,' said I to him, 'that is being transacted in a place like this,' and then I was going to say something uncivil, but he went to attend to the new comers, and I took myself away on my own business as he bade me, not, however, before observing that these two last were a couple of blackcoats.

The postillion then proceeded to relate how he made the best of his way to a small public-house, about a mile off, where he had intended to bait, and how he met on the way a landau and pair, belonging to a Scotch coxcomb whom he had known in London, about whom he related some curious particulars, and then

continued: "Well, after I had passed him and his turn-out, I drove straight to the public-house, where I baited my horses, and where I found some of the chaises and drivers who had driven the folks to the lunatic-looking mansion, and were now waiting to take them up again. Whilst my horses were eating their bait, I sat me down, as the weather was warm, at a table outside, and smoked a pipe, and drank some ale, in company with the coachman of the old gentleman who had gone to the house with his son, and the coachman then told me that the house was a Papist house, and that the present was a grand meeting of all the fools and rascals in the country, who came to bow down to images, and to concert schemes—pretty schemes no doubt—for overturning the religion of the country, and that for his part he did not approve of being concerned with such doings, and that he was going to give his master warning next day. So, as we were drinking and discoursing, up drove the chariot of the Scotchman, and down got his valet and the driver, and whilst the driver was seeing after the horses, the valet came and sat down at the table where the gentleman's coachman and I were drinking. I knew the

fellow well, a Scotchman like his master, and just of the same kidney, with white kid gloves, red hair frizzled, a patch of paint on his face, and his hands covered with rings. This very fellow, I must tell you, was one of those most busy in endeavouring to get me turned out of the servants' club in Park Lane, because I happened to serve a literary man; so he sat down, and in a kind of affected tone cried out, 'Landlord, bring me a glass of cold negus.' The landlord, however, told him that there was no negus, but that if he pleased, he could have a jug of as good beer as any in the country. 'Confound the beer,' said the valet, 'do you think I am accustomed to such vulgar beverage?' However, as he found there was nothing better to be had, he let the man bring him some beer, and when he had got it, soon showed that he could drink it easily enough; so, when he had drank two or three draughts, he turned his eyes in a contemptuous manner, first, on the coachman, and then on me: I saw the scamp recollected me, for after staring at me and at my dress for about half a minute, he put on a broad grin, and flinging his head back, he uttered a loud laugh. Well, I did not like this,

as you may well believe, and taking the pipe out of my mouth, I asked him if he meant anything personal, to which he answered, that he had said nothing to me, and that he had a right to look where he pleased, and laugh when he pleased. Well, as to a certain extent he was right, as to looking and laughing; and as I have occasionally looked at a fool and laughed, though I was not the fool in this instance, I put my pipe into my mouth and said no more. This quiet and well-regulated behaviour of mine, however, the fellow interpreted into fear; so, after drinking a little more, he suddenly started up, and striding once or twice before the table, he asked me what I meant by that impertinent question of mine, saying that he had a good mind to wring my nose for my presumption. 'You have?' said I, getting up, and laying down my pipe, 'Well, I 'll now give you an opportunity.' So I put myself in an attitude, and went up to him, saying, 'I have an old score to settle with you, you scamp; you wanted to get me turned out of the club, didn't you?' And thereupon, remembering that he had threatened to wring my nose, I gave him a snorter upon his own. I wish you could have

seen the fellow when he felt the smart; so far from trying to defend himself, he turned round, and with his hand to his face, attempted to run away, but I was now in a regular passion, and following him up, got before him, and was going to pummel away at him, when he burst into tears, and begged me not to hurt him, saying that he was sorry if he had offended me, and that, if I pleased, he would go down on his knees, or do anything else I wanted. Well, when I heard him talk in this manner, I of course let him be; I could hardly help laughing at the figure he cut; his face all blubbered with tears, and blood and paint; but I did not laugh at the poor creature either, but went to the table and took up my pipe, and smoked and drank as if nothing had happened; and the fellow, after having been to the pump, came and sat down, crying, and trying to curry favour with me and the coachman; presently, however, putting on a confidential look, he began to talk of the Popish house, and of the doings there, and said he supposed as how we were of the party, and that it was all right; and then he began to talk of the Pope of Rome, and what a nice man he was, and what a fine thing it was

to be of his religion, especially if folks went over to him; and how it advanced them in the world, and gave them consideration; and how his master, who had been abroad and seen the Pope, and kissed his toe, was going over to the Popish religion, and had persuaded him to consent to do so, and to forsake his own, which I think the scoundrel called the 'Piscopal Church of Scotland, and how many others of that church were going over, thinking to better their condition in life by so doing, and to be more thought on; and how many of the English church were thinking of going over too—and that he had no doubt that it would all end right and comfortably. Well, as he was going on in this way, the old coachman began to spit, and getting up, flung all the beer that was in his jug upon the ground, and going away, ordered another jug of beer, and sat down at another table, saying that he would not drink in such company; and I too got up, and flung what beer remained in my jug, there wasn't more than a drop, in the fellow's face, saying, I would scorn to drink any more in such company; and then I went to my horses, put them to, paid my reckoning, and drove home."

The postillion having related his story, to which I listened with all due attention, mused for a moment, and then said, "I dare say you remember how, some time since, when old Bill had been telling us how the Government, a long time ago, had done away with robbing on the highway, by putting down the public-houses and places which the highwaymen frequented, and by sending out a good mounted police to hunt them down, I said that it was a shame that the present Government did not employ somewhat the same means in order to stop the proceedings of Mumbo Jumbo and his gang now-a-days in England. Howsomever, since I have driven a fare to a Popish rendezvous, and seen something of what is going on there, I should conceive that the Government are justified in allowing the gang the free exercise of their calling. Anybody is welcome to stoop and pick up nothing, or worse than nothing, and if Mumbo Jumbo's people, after their expeditions, return to their haunts with no better plunder in the shape of converts than what I saw going into yonder place of call, I should say they are welcome to what they get; for if that 's the kind of rubbish they steal out of the Church of England, or any

other church, who in his senses but would say a good riddance, and many thanks for your trouble: at any rate that is my opinion of the matter."

CHAPTER XXIX.

DELIBERATIONS WITH SELF.—RESOLUTION.—INVITATION TO DINNER.—THE COMMERCIAL TRAVELLER.—THE LANDLORD'S OFFER.—THE COMET WINE.

It was now that I had frequent deliberations with myself. Should I continue at the inn in my present position? I was not very much captivated with it; there was little poetry in keeping an account of the corn, hay, and straw which came in, and was given out, and I was fond of poetry; moreover, there was no glory at all to be expected in doing so, and I was fond of glory. Should I give up that situation, and remaining at the inn, become ostler under old Bill? There was more poetry in rubbing down horses than in keeping an account of straw, hay, and corn; there was also some prospect of glory attached to the situation of ostler, for the grooms and stable-boys occasionally talked of an ostler, a great way down the road, who had been presented by some

sporting people, not with a silver vase, as our governor had been, but with a silver currycomb, in testimony of their admiration for his skill; but I confess that the poetry of rubbing down had become, as all other poetry becomes, rather prosy by frequent repetition, and with respect to the chance of deriving glory from the employment, I entertained, in the event of my determining to stay, very slight hope of ever attaining skill in the ostler art sufficient to induce sporting people to bestow upon me a silver currycomb. I was not half so good an ostler as old Bill, who had never been presented with a silver currycomb, and I never expected to become so, therefore what chance had I? It was true, there was a prospect of some pecuniary emolument to be derived by remaining in either situation. It was very probable that, provided I continued to keep an account of the hay and corn coming in and expended, the landlord would consent to allow me a pound a week, which at the end of a dozen years, provided I kept myself sober, would amount to a considerable sum. I might, on the retirement of old Bill, by taking his place, save up a decent sum of money, provided, unlike him, I kept myself sober, and laid by all the shillings and six-

pences I got; but the prospect of laying up a decent sum of money was not of sufficient importance to induce me to continue either at my wooden desk, or in the inn-yard. The reader will remember what difficulty I had to make up my mind to become a merchant under the Armenian's auspices, even with the prospect of making two or three hundred thousand pounds by following the Armenian way of doing business, so it was not probable that I should feel disposed to be book-keeper or ostler all my life with no other prospect than being able to make a tidy sum of money. If indeed, besides the prospect of making a tidy sum at the end of perhaps forty years ostlering, I had been certain of being presented with a silver currycomb with my name engraved upon it, which I might have left to my descendants, or, in default thereof, to the parish church destined to contain my bones, with directions that it might be soldered into the wall above the arch leading from the body of the church into the chancel—I will not say that with such a certainty of immortality, combined with such a prospect of moderate pecuniary advantage, I might not have thought it worth my while to stay, but I entertained no such certainty, and taking everything into con-

sideration, I determined to mount my horse and leave the inn.

This horse had caused me for some time past no little perplexity; I had frequently repented of having purchased him, more especially as the purchase had been made with another person's money, and had more than once shown him to people who, I imagined, were likely to purchase him; but, though they were profuse in his praise, as people generally are in the praise of what they don't intend to purchase, they never made me an offer, and now that I had determined to mount on his back and ride away, what was I to do with him in the sequel? I could not maintain him long. Suddenly I bethought me of Horncastle, which Francis Ardry had mentioned as a place where the horse was likely to find a purchaser, and not having determined upon any particular place to which to repair, I thought that I could do no better than betake myself to Horncastle in the first instance, and there endeavour to dispose of my horse.

On making inquiries with respect to the situation of Horncastle, and the time when the fair would be held, I learned that the town was situated in Lincolnshire, about a hundred and fifty miles from the inn at which I was at

present sojourning, and that the fair would be held nominally within about a month, but that it was always requisite to be on the spot some days before the nominal day of the fair, as all the best horses were generally sold before that time, and the people who came to purchase gone away with what they had bought.

The people of the inn were very sorry on being informed of my determination to depart. Old Bill told me that he had hoped as how I had intended to settle down there, and to take his place as ostler when he was fit for no more work, adding, that though I did not know much of the business, yet he had no doubt but that I might improve. My friend the postillion was particularly sorry, and taking me with him to the tap-room called for two pints of beer, to one of which he treated me; and whilst we were drinking told me how particularly sorry he was at the thought of my going, but that he hoped I should think better of the matter. On my telling him that I must go, he said that he trusted I should put off my departure for three weeks, in order that I might be present at his marriage, the bans of which were just about to be published. He said that nothing would give him greater pleasure than to see me dance a minuet

with his wife after the marriage dinner; but I told him it was impossible that I should stay, my affairs imperatively calling me elsewhere; and that with respect to my dancing a minuet, such a thing was out of the question, as I had never learned to dance. At which he said that he was exceedingly sorry, and finding me determined to go, wished me success in all my undertakings.

The master of the house, to whom, as in duty bound, I communicated my intention before I spoke of it to the servants, was, I make no doubt, very sorry, though he did not exactly tell me so. What he said was, that he had never expected that I should remain long there, as such a situation never appeared to him quite suitable to me, though I had been very diligent, and had given him perfect satisfaction. On his inquiring when I intended to depart, I informed him next day, whereupon he begged that I would defer my departure till the next day but one, and do him the favour of dining with him on the morrow. I informed him that I should be only too happy.

On the following day at four o'clock I dined with the landlord, in company with a commercial traveller. The dinner was good, though

plain, consisting of boiled mackarel—rather a rarity in those parts at that time—with fennel sauce, a prime baron of roast beef after the mackarel, then a tart and noble Cheshire cheese; we had prime sherry at dinner, and whilst eating the cheese prime porter, that of Barclay, the only good porter in the world. After the cloth was removed we had a bottle of very good port; and whilst partaking of the port I had an argument with the commercial traveller on the subject of the corn-laws.

The commercial traveller, having worsted me in the argument on the subject of the corn-laws, got up in great glee, saying that he must order his gig, as business must be attended to. Before leaving the room, however, he shook me patronizingly by the hand, and said something to the master of the house, but in so low a tone that it escaped my ear.

No sooner had he departed than the master of the house told me that his friend the traveller had just said that I was a confounded sensible young fellow, and not at all opinionated, a sentiment in which he himself perfectly agreed —then hemming once or twice, he said that as I was going on a journey he hoped I was tolerably well provided with money, adding that

travelling was rather expensive, especially on horseback, the manner in which he supposed, as I had a horse in the stable, I intended to travel. I told him that though I was not particularly well supplied with money, I had sufficient for the expenses of my journey, at the end of which I hoped to procure more. He then hemmed again, and said that since I had been at the inn I had rendered him a great deal of service in more ways than one, and that he could not think of permitting me to depart without making me some remuneration; then putting his hand into his waistcoat pocket he handed me a cheque for ten pounds, which he had prepared beforehand, the value of which he said I could receive at the next town, or that, if I wished it, any waiter in the house would cash it for me. I thanked him for his generosity in the best terms I could select, but, handing him back his cheque, I told him that I could not accept it, saying that, so far from his being my debtor, I believed myself to be indebted to him, as not only myself but my horse had been living at his house for several weeks. He replied, that as for my board at a house like his it amounted to nothing, and as for the little corn and hay which the horse had

consumed it was of no consequence, and that he must insist upon my taking the cheque. But I again declined, telling him that doing so would be a violation of a rule which I had determined to follow, and which nothing but the greatest necessity would ever compel me to break through — never to incur obligations. "But," said he, "receiving this money will not be incurring an obligation, it is your due." "I do not think so," said I; "I did not engage to serve you for money, nor will I take any from you." "Perhaps you will take it as a loan?" said he. "No," I replied, "I never borrow." "Well," said the landlord, smiling, "you are different from all others that I am acquainted with. I never yet knew any one else who scrupled to borrow and receive obligations; why, there are two baronets in this neighbourhood who have borrowed money of me, ay, and who have never repaid what they borrowed; and there are a dozen squires who are under considerable obligations to me, who I dare say will never return them. Come, you need not be more scrupulous than your superiors—I mean in station." "Every vessel must stand on its own bottom," said I; "they take pleasure in receiving obligations, I take pleasure in being independent.

Perhaps they are wise, and I am a fool, I know not, but one thing I am certain of, which is, that were I not independent I should be very unhappy: I should have no visions then." "Have you any relations?" said the landlord, looking at me compassionately; "excuse me, but I don't think you are exactly fit to take care of yourself." "There you are mistaken," said I, "I can take precious good care of myself; ay, and can drive a precious hard bargain when I have occasion, but driving bargains is a widely different thing from receiving gifts. I am going to take my horse to Horncastle, and when there I shall endeavour to obtain his full value—ay to the last penny."

"Horncastle!" said the landlord, "I have heard of that place; you mustn't be dreaming visions when you get there, or they 'll steal the horse from under you. Well," said he, rising, "I shall not press you farther on the subject of the cheque. I intend, however, to put you under an obligation to me." He then rang the bell, and having ordered two fresh glasses to be brought, he went out and presently returned with a small pint bottle, which he uncorked with his own hand; then sitting down, he said, "The wine that I bring here, is port of eighteen

hundred and eleven, the year of the comet, the best vintage on record; the wine which we have been drinking," he added, "is good, but not to be compared with this, which I never sell, and which I am chary of. When you have drank some of it, I think you will own that I have conferred an obligation upon you;" he then filled the glasses, the wine which he poured out diffusing an aroma through the room; then motioning me to drink, he raised his own glass to his lips, saying, "Come, friend, I drink to your success at Horncastle."

CHAPTER XXX.

TRIUMPHAL DEPARTURE.—NO SEASON LIKE YOUTH.—EXTREME OLD AGE.—BEAUTIFUL ENGLAND.—THE RATCATCHER.—A MISADVENTURE.

I DEPARTED from the inn much in the same fashion as I had come to it, mounted on a splendid horse indifferently well caparisoned, with the small valise attached to my crupper, in which, besides the few things I had brought with me, was a small book of roads with a map, which had been presented to me by the landlord. I must not forget to state that I did not ride out of the yard, but that my horse was brought to me at the front door by old Bill, who insisted upon doing so, and who refused a five-shilling piece which I offered him; and it will be as well to let the reader know that the landlord shook me by the hand as I mounted, and that the people attached to the inn, male and female—my friend the postillion at the head — assembled before the house to see me off, and gave me three cheers as

I rode away. Perhaps no person ever departed from an inn with more éclat or better wishes; nobody looked at me askance, except two stage-coachmen who were loitering about, one of whom said to his companion, "I say, Jim! twig his portmanteau! a regular Newmarket turn out by . . . .!"

It was in the cool of the evening of a bright day—all the days of that summer were bright—that I departed. I felt at first rather melancholy at finding myself again launched into the wide world, and leaving the friends whom I had lately made behind me; but by occasionally trotting the horse, and occasionally singing a song of Romanvile, I had dispelled the feeling of melancholy by the time I had proceeded three miles down the main road. It was at the end of these three miles, just opposite a milestone, that I struck into a cross road. After riding about seven miles, threading what are called, in postillion parlance, cross-country roads, I reached another high road, tending to the east, along which I proceeded for a mile or two, when coming to a small inn, about nine o'clock, I halted and put up for the night.

Early on the following morning I proceeded on my journey, but fearing to gall the horse, I

no longer rode him, but led him by the bridle, until I came to a town at the distance of about ten miles from the place where I had passed the night. Here I stayed during the heat of the day, more on the horse's account than my own, and towards evening resumed my journey, leading the animal by the bridle as before; and in this manner I proceeded for several days, travelling on an average from twenty to twenty-five miles a day, always leading the animal, except perhaps now and then of an evening, when, if I saw a good piece of road before me, I would mount and put the horse into a trot, which the creature seemed to enjoy as much as myself, showing his satisfaction by snorting and neighing, whilst I gave utterance to my own exhilaration by shouts, or by "the chi she is kaulo she soves pré lakie dumo," or by something else of the same kind in Romanvile.

On the whole, I journeyed along very pleasantly, certainly quite as pleasantly as I do at present, now that I am become a gentleman, and weigh sixteen stone, though some people would say that my present manner of travelling is much the most preferable, riding as I now do, instead of leading my horse; receiving the homage of ostlers instead of their familiar nods;

sitting down to dinner in the parlour of the best inn I can find, instead of passing the brightest part of the day in the kitchen of a village alehouse; carrying on my argument after dinner on the subject of the corn-laws, with the best commercial gentlemen on the road, instead of being glad, whilst sipping a pint of beer, to get into conversation with blind trampers, or maimed Abraham sailors, regaling themselves on half-pints at the said village hostelries. Many people will doubtless say that things have altered wonderfully with me for the better, and they would say right, provided I possessed now what I then carried about with me in my journeys—the spirit of youth. Youth is the only season for enjoyment, and the first twenty-five years of one's life are worth all the rest of the longest life of man, even though those five-and-twenty be spent in penury and contempt, and the rest in the possession of wealth, honours, respectability, ay, and many of them in strength and health, such as will enable one to ride forty miles before dinner, and over one's pint of port—for the best gentleman in the land should not drink a bottle—carry on one's argument, with gravity and decorum, with any commercial gentleman who, responsive to one's chal-

lenge, takes the part of common sense and humanity against "protection" and the lord of land.

Ah! there is nothing like youth—not that after-life is valueless. Even in extreme old age one may get on very well, provided we will but accept of the bounties of God. I met the other day an old man, who asked me to drink. "I am not thirsty," said I, "and will not drink with you." "Yes, you will," said the old man, "for I am this day one hundred years old; and you will never again have an opportunity of drinking the health of a man on his hundredth birthday." So I broke my word, and drank. "Yours is a wonderful age," said I. "It is a long time to look back to the beginning of it," said the old man; "yet, upon the whole, I am not sorry to have lived it all." "How have you passed your time?" said I. "As well as I could," said the old man; "always enjoying a good thing when it came honestly within my reach; not forgetting to praise God for putting it there." "I suppose you were fond of a glass of good ale when you were young?" "Yes," said the old man, "I was; and so, thank God, I am still." And he drank off a glass of ale.

On I went in my journey, traversing England from west to east—ascending and descending hills—crossing rivers by bridge and ferry—and passing over extensive plains. What a beautiful country is England! People run abroad to see beautiful countries, and leave their own behind unknown, unnoticed—their own the most beautiful! And then, again, what a country for adventures! especially to those who travel it on foot, or on horseback. People run abroad in quest of adventures, and traverse Spain and Portugal on mule or on horseback; whereas there are ten times more adventures to be met with in England than in Spain, Portugal, or stupid Germany to boot. Witness the number of adventures narrated in the present book—a book entirely devoted to England. Why, there is not a chapter in the present book which is not full of adventures, with the exception of the present one, and this is not yet terminated.

After traversing two or three counties, I reached the confines of Lincolnshire. During one particularly hot day I put up at a public-house, to which, in the evening, came a party of harvesters to make merry, who, finding me wandering about the house a stranger, invited

me to partake of their ale; so I drank with the harvesters, who sang me songs about rural life, such as—

"Sitting in the swale; and listening to the swindle of the flail, as it sounds dub-a-dub on the corn, from the neighbouring barn."

In requital for which I treated them with a song, not of Romanvile, but the song of "Sivord and the horse Grayman." I remained with them till it was dark, having, after sunset, entered into deep discourse with a celebrated ratcatcher, who communicated to me the secrets of his trade, saying, amongst other things, "When you see the rats pouring out of their holes, and running up my hands and arms, it 's not after me they comes, but after the oils I carries about me they comes;" and who subsequently spoke in the most enthusiastic manner of his trade, saying that it was the best trade in the world, and most diverting, and that it was likely to last for ever; for whereas all other kinds of vermin were fast disappearing from England, rats were every day becoming more abundant. I had quitted this good company, and having mounted my horse, was making my way towards a town at about six miles' distance, at a swinging trot, my thoughts deeply engaged on what I had gathered from the

ratcatcher, when all on a sudden a light glared upon the horse's face, who purled round in great terror, and flung me out of the saddle, as from a sling, or with as much violence as the horse Grayman, in the ballad, flings Sivord the Snareswayne. I fell upon the ground—felt a kind of crashing about my neck—and forthwith became senseless.

CHAPTER XXXI.

NOVEL SITUATION.—THE ELDERLY INDIVIDUAL.—THE SURGEON.—A KIND OFFER.—CHIMERICAL IDEAS.—STRANGE DREAM.

How long I remained senseless I cannot say, for a considerable time I believe; at length, opening my eyes, I found myself lying on a bed in a middle-sized chamber, lighted by a candle, which stood on a table—an elderly man stood near me, and a yet more elderly female was holding a phial of very pungent salts to my olfactory organ. I attempted to move, but felt very stiff —my right arm appeared nearly paralyzed, and there was a strange dull sensation in my head. "You had better remain still, young man," said the elderly individual, "the surgeon will be here presently; I have sent a message for him to the neighbouring village." "Where am I?" said I, "and what has happened?" "You are in my house," said the old man, "and you have been flung from a horse. I am sorry to say that I was the cause. As I was driving home, the

lights in my gig frightened the animal." "Where is the horse," said I? "Below, in my stable," said the elderly individual. "I saw you fall, but knowing that on account of my age I could be of little use to you, I instantly hurried home, the accident did not occur more than a furlong off, and procuring the assistance of my lad, and two or three neighbouring cottagers, I returned to the spot where you were lying senseless. We raised you up, and brought you here. My lad then went in quest of the horse, who had run away as we drew nigh. When we saw him first, he was standing near you; he caught him with some difficulty, and brought him home." "What are you about?" said the old man, as I strove to get off the bed. "I want to see the horse," said I. "I entreat you to be still," said the old man; "the horse is safe, I assure you." "I am thinking about his knees," said I. "Instead of thinking about your horse's knees," said the old man, "be thankful that you have not broke your own neck." "You do not talk wisely," said I; "when a man's neck is broke he is provided for; but when his horse's knees are broke, he is a lost jockey, that is, if he has nothing but his horse to depend upon. A pretty figure I should cut at Horncastle, mounted on a horse blood-raw at the knees."

"Oh, you are going to Horncastle," said the old man, seriously, then I can sympathize with you in your anxiety about your horse, being a Lincolnshire man, and the son of one who bred horses. I will myself go down into the stable, and examine into the condition of your horse, so pray remain quiet till I return; it would certainly be a terrible thing to appear at Horncastle on a broken-kneed horse."

He left the room, and returned at the end of about ten minutes, followed by another person. "Your horse is safe," said he, "and his knees are unblemished; not a hair ruffled. He is a fine animal, and will do credit to Horncastle; but here is the surgeon come to examine into your own condition." The surgeon was a man about thirty-five, thin, and rather tall; his face was long and pale, and his hair, which was light, was carefully combed back as much as possible from his forehead. He was dressed very neatly, and spoke in a very precise tone. "Allow me to feel your pulse, friend?" said he, taking me by the right wrist. I uttered a cry, for at the motion which he caused a thrill of agony darted through my arm. "I hope your arm is not broke, my friend," said the surgeon, "allow me to see; first of all, we must divest you of this cumbrous frock."

The frock was removed with some difficulty, and then the upper vestments of my frame, with more difficulty still. The surgeon felt my arm, moving it up and down, causing me unspeakable pain. "There is no fracture," said he, at last, "but a contusion—a violent contusion. I am told you were going to Horncastle; I am afraid you will be hardly able to ride your horse thither in time to dispose of him; however, we shall see—your arm must be bandaged, friend; after which I will bleed you, and administer a composing draught."

To be short, the surgeon did as he proposed, and when he had administered the composing draught, he said, "Be of good cheer; I should not be surprised if you are yet in time for Horncastle." He then departed with the master of the house, and the woman, leaving me to my repose, I soon began to feel drowsy, and was just composing myself to slumber, lying on my back, as the surgeon had advised me, when I heard steps ascending the stairs, and in a moment more the surgeon entered again, followed by the master of the house. "I hope we don't disturb you," said the former; "my reason for returning is to relieve your mind from any anxiety with respect to your horse. I am by no means sure that you will be

able, owing to your accident, to reach Horncastle in time: to quiet you, however, I will buy your horse for any reasonable sum. I have been down to the stable, and approve of his figure. What do you ask for him?" "This is a strange time of night," said I, "to come to me about purchasing my horse, and I am hardly in a fitting situation to be applied to about such a matter. What do you want him for?" "For my own use," said the surgeon; "I am a professional man, and am obliged to be continually driving about; I cover at least one hundred and fifty miles every week." "He will never answer your purpose," said I, "he is not a driving horse, and was never between shafts in his life; he is for riding, more especially for trotting, at which he has few equals." "It matters not to me whether he is for riding or driving," said the surgeon, "sometimes I ride, sometimes drive; so if we can come to terms, I will buy him, though remember it is chiefly to remove any anxiety from your mind about him." "This is no time for bargaining," said I, "if you wish to have the horse for a hundred guineas, you may; if not . . . ." "A hundred guineas," said the surgeon, "my good friend, you must surely be light-headed; allow me to feel your pulse," and

he attempted to feel my left wrist. "I am not light-headed," said I, "and I require no one to feel my pulse; but I should be light-headed if I were to sell my horse for less than I have demanded; but I have a curiosity to know what you would be willing to offer." "Thirty pounds," said the surgeon, "is all I can afford to give; and that is a great deal for a country surgeon to offer for a horse." "Thirty pounds," said I, "why he cost me nearly double that sum. To tell you the truth, I am afraid you want to take advantage of my situation." "Not in the least, friend," said the surgeon, "not in the least; I only wished to set your mind at rest about your horse; but as you think he is worth more than I can afford to offer, take him to Horncastle by all means; I will do my best to cure you in time. Good night, I will see you again on the morrow." Thereupon he once more departed with the master of the house. "A sharp one," I heard him say, with a laugh, as the door closed upon him.

Left to myself, I again essayed to compose myself to rest, but for some time in vain. I had been terribly shaken by my fall, and had subsequently, owing to the incision of the surgeon's lancet, been deprived of much of the vital fluid; it is when

the body is in such a state that the merest trifles affect and agitate the mind; no wonder, then, that the return of the surgeon and the master of the house for the purpose of inquiring whether I would sell my horse, struck me as being highly extraordinary, considering the hour of the night, and the situation in which they knew me to be. What could they mean by such conduct—did they wish to cheat me of the animal? "Well, well," said I, "if they did, what matters, they found their match; yes, yes," said I, "but I am in their power, perhaps"—but I instantly dismissed the apprehension which came into my mind, with a pooh, nonsense! in a little time, however, a far more foolish and chimerical idea began to disturb me—the idea of being flung from my horse; was I not disgraced for ever as a horseman by being flung from my horse? Assuredly, I thought; and the idea of being disgraced as a horseman, operating on my nervous system, caused me very acute misery. "After all," said I to myself, "it was perhaps the contemptible opinion which the surgeon must have formed of my equestrian powers, which induced him to offer to take my horse off my hands; he perhaps thought I was unable to manage a horse, and therefore in pity returned in the dead of night to offer to pur-

chase the animal which had flung me; and then the thought that the surgeon had conceived a contemptible opinion of my equestrian powers, caused me the acutest misery, and continued tormenting me until some other idea (I have forgot what it was, but doubtless equally foolish) took possession of my mind. At length, brought on by the agitation of my spirits, there came over me the same feeling of horror that I had experienced of old when I was a boy, and likewise of late within the dingle; it was, however, not so violent as it had been on those occasions, and I struggled manfully against it, until by degrees it passed away, and then I fell asleep; and in my sleep I had an ugly dream. I dreamt that I had died of the injuries I had received from my fall, and that no sooner had my soul departed from my body than it entered that of a quadruped, even my own horse in the stable—in a word, I was, to all intents and purposes, my own steed; and as I stood in the stable chewing hay (and I remember that the hay was exceedingly tough), the door opened, and the surgeon who had attended me came in. "My good animal," said he, "as your late master has scarcely left enough to pay for the expenses of his funeral, and nothing to remunerate me for

my trouble, I shall make bold to take possession of you. If your paces are good, I shall keep you for my own riding; if not, I shall take you to Horncastle, your original destination." He then bridled and saddled me, and, leading me out, mounted, and then trotted me up and down before the house, at the door of which the old man, who now appeared to be dressed in regular jockey fashion, was standing. "I like his paces well," said the surgeon; "I think I shall take him for my own use." "And what am I to have for all the trouble his master caused me?" said my late entertainer, on whose countenance I now observed, for the first time, a diabolical squint. "The consciousness of having done your duty to a fellow-creature in succouring him in a time of distress, must be your reward," said the surgeon. "Pretty gammon, truly," said my late entertainer; "what would you say if I were to talk in that way to you? Come, unless you choose to behave jonnock, I shall take the bridle and lead the horse back into the stable." "Well," said the surgeon, "we are old friends, and I don't wish to dispute with you, so I'll tell you what I will do; I will ride the animal to Horncastle, and we will share what he fetches like brothers." "Good," said the old man, "but if you say that

you have sold him for less than a hundred, I shan't consider you jonnock ; remember what the young fellow said—that young fellow. . . ." I heard no more, for the next moment I found myself on a broad road leading, as I supposed, in the direction of Horncastle, the surgeon still in the saddle, and my legs moving at a rapid trot. "Get on," said the surgeon, jerking my mouth with the bit ; whereupon, full of rage, I instantly set off at a full gallop, determined, if possible, to dash my rider to the earth. The surgeon, however, kept his seat, and, so far from attempting to abate my speed, urged me on to greater efforts with a stout stick, which methought he held in his hand. In vain did I rear and kick, attempting to get rid of my foe ; but the surgeon remained as saddle-fast as ever the Maugrabin sorcerer in the Arabian tale what time he rode the young prince transformed into a steed to his enchanted palace in the wilderness. At last, as I was still madly dashing on, panting and blowing, and had almost given up all hope, I saw at a distance before me a heap of stones by the side of the road, probably placed there for the purpose of repairing it ; a thought appeared to strike me —I will shy at those stones, and if I can't get rid of him so, resign myself to my fate. So I

increased my speed, till arriving within about ten yards of the heap, I made a desperate start, turning half round with nearly the velocity of a millstone. Oh, the joy I experienced when I felt my enemy canted over my neck, and saw him lying senseless in the road. "I have you now in my power," I said, or rather neighed, as, going up to my prostrate foe, I stood over him. "Suppose I were to rear now, and let my fore feet fall upon you, what would your life be worth? that is, supposing you are not killed already; but lie there, I will do you no farther harm, but trot to Horncastle without a rider, and when there . . . ." and without further reflection off I trotted in the direction of Horncastle, but had not gone far before my bridle, falling from my neck, got entangled with my off fore foot. I felt myself falling, a thrill of agony shot through me—my knees would be broken, and what should I do at Horncastle with a pair of broken knees? I struggled, but I could not disengage my off fore foot, and downward I fell, but before I had reached the ground I awoke, and found myself half out of bed, my bandaged arm in considerable pain, and my left hand just touching the floor.

With some difficulty I readjusted myself in bed. It was now early morning, and the first rays of

the sun were beginning to penetrate the white curtains of a window on my left, which probably looked into a garden, as I caught a glimpse or two of the leaves of trees through a small uncovered part at the side. For some time I felt uneasy and anxious, my spirits being in a strange fluttering state. At last my eyes fell upon a small row of tea-cups, seemingly of china, which stood on a mantelpiece exactly fronting the bottom of the bed. The sight of these objects, I know not why, soothed and pacified me ; I kept my eyes fixed upon them, as I lay on my back on the bed, with my head upon the pillow, till at last I fell into a calm and refreshing sleep.

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